

Rachel Mrs Donnelly

T H E

H I S T O R Y O F

Miss DELIA STANHOPE.

In a SERIES of LETTERS

T O

Miss DORINDA BOOTHBY.

In TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

D U B L I N :

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HISTORY

Mrs. Deady's Standard

A Magazine of Letters

OF

The English Booty

IN ONE VOLUME.

VOLUME

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WILLIAM WILSON AND SONS LTD
PRINTERS, PUBLISHERS TO THE GOVERNMENT

EDUCATIONAL



THE
HISTORY
OF
Miss DELIA STANHOPE.

LETTER I.

To *Miss Dorinda Boothby*.

I Am half persuaded there is no such thing as true friendship in life—When I have related my sad reverse of fortune since I saw you, and the change it has produced in the behaviour of my once flattering and caressing acquaintance, you will allow I have great reason to be disgusted with the world; and, I doubt not, will excuse a reflection, in which I would still hope *Dorinda* has no share—Yes,

VOL. I.

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my dear girl, I am determined to believe you still do, and will love me, notwithstanding I am no longer that celebrated thing, that shone in the box and sparkled in the ring—O horrid! what a dreary change, from a palace to a cottage! When I survey my present habitation, and compare this solitary wilderness to the dear town, to which I have bid, perhaps, an eternal adieu, you may guess what effect it must have on my spirits—Here is room for meditation, even to madness. But what, you will ask, has produced this wonderful change?—O bid me not be particular in the relation of my woes—Amongst all the purling streams, very undeservedly, in my opinion, celebrated by the Poets, not one of them has, I fear the virtues of *Lethe*; or how eagerly would I drink an oblivion to my care. But how I ramble! Alas! what other employment is now left me—yet I must try to satisfy your curiosity. Know, then, my dear, that the sudden death of my father has reduced mamma and me to what, compared to my former affluence, I can hardly help calling indigence; though by her, who has a mind superior to misfortunes, it is still esteemed a very reasonable competency.

The figure we made in the Beau Monde was chiefly supported by the lucrative places my father enjoyed under the government—The world believed him rich—he did not try to undeceive them; imagining the contrary persuasion



suation would be to my advantage, knowing the prudent turn of the present age ; the male part of which have adopted the sentiments of a song that I used formerly, in the gaiety of my heart, to sing to them :

I'm off with wit, and beauty will fade,
And virtue in rags is not worth a shilling ;
But she that has money her market is made,
And every charm about her is killing.

In short, my dear, with the shattered remains of our once flourishing fortune we have deserted the town, being first deserted by all our friends—Prostituted word!— how little did they deserve that appellation !—My train of lovers, too, who were dying for me while in prosperity, calling their reason and philosophy to their aid, saw me depart with the most christian-like fortitude and resignation— Odious wretches ! how they have humbled me. Thus, my dear, have I huddled over the account of my fall, but not from virtue, that, thank Heaven, is still left for my consolation, as well as youth and beauty—But of what advantage is the latter now ? To bloom and fade like a rose in the desart, unseen and unadmired—From what I have been, take a slight survey of what I am. Figure to yourself a lonely cot, situated the Lord knows where ; in the desarts of *Arabia*, I believe ; it is certain there is not a Beau nor Belle within a thousand miles of us—Mamma, however, is highly pleased

with our rural habitation, and perfectly content with her lot—Much good may it do her; but so am not I. She talks much of the serenity we enjoy—Serene, with a vengeance—For my part, I have hardly been thoroughly awake since I was transported here.-----Though, that I might not want for amusement, I have been suffered to bring my spinnet and guittar with me, as well as materials for drawing—But for what purpose should I endeavour to improve accomplishments, which I shall now have no opportunity of displaying? — Without that view very little trouble will be taken—Fame is the universal passion. Somebody says, “A woman’s greatest fame is to have been ‘unknown.’”—A very sober maxim, but not at all to my taste—Languor and inactivity have taken possession of me—

We eat, we drink, we sleep—good folks, what then?—

Why then we eat, we drink, and sleep again.

I can have no notion of the pleasure mamma boasts of, in contemplating the beautiful Works of Nature. She assures me, too, that it affords her continual variety—But, for my part, I see nothing but the same dull scene over and over again—Amusements too insipid to suit my taste—Talk not to me of fine prospects; commend me to a moving picture—crowded streets, and all the delight-
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Miss DELIA STANHOPE. 5

ful noise and bustle of the dear enchanting town—I have no relish for any thing I can enjoy at present ; yet *St. Evermont* says, “ a pretty woman will never be totally unhappy while she retains her beauty, let her circumstances be what they will.”—Upon my word, I believe he perfectly understood our foible ; for, would you believe it, in spite of my indifference for every thing else, my person still employs my care—Powerful vanity, who can resist thy influence ?—Heigh, ho !—What had I else to say to you ; not a great deal, you may believe, from my present situation ; yet you must permit me to write, it will be some consolation in my banishment—Our old virgin, and only attendant, except a rosey-faced country girl, has just summoned me to dinner—’Tis an original mortal—an old maid, as I said, and a Methodist—need I attempt a more expressive description. This pair of females, mamma, and a cat as ancient as the former, is the whole of our family—Can you not form an idea of us when assembled, the latter purring, the first canting, and mamma all composure and goodness ?—O, heavens ! what a sober set ! add to them your dreary friend,

DELIA STANHOPE.

B 3

L E T-

LETTER II.

To Miss BOOTHBY.

THE morning is delightful—mamma would have persuaded me to enjoy it, as she calls it, by accompanying her in a walk; but I preferred writing to my *Dorinda*, —I hate a solitary country ramble;

Let me wander not unseen—

The dear Park, shall I never more re-visit your delightful walks? O the pleasing painful recollection of past scenes—Adieu, ye charming sports and plays, and every scene that was diverting—The honest simple soul, *Martba*, has been displaying her eloquence, in order to persuade me to go with her to a little wood at some distance, where she has discovered—a very notable one, you'll say—a nest of beautiful turtle-doves—Good virgin, what infantine amusements would she induce me to engage in—I'll warrant she was as much delighted with her discovery as if she had stumbled upon a covey of beaux; however, I will condescend to humour her for once; our family is not compleat without a few of those melancholy cooing animals to add to it. Adieu, then; I propose finishing my epistle when I return, tho' of what it will consist Heaven knows; no matters of fact now to treat of, but all depends on the fruitfulness of my imagination, which, *entre nous*,

nous, was never more barren than at present.

Monday, Four o'Clock.

An adventure, such as it is—better than nothing, however—But take the particulars—I attended Mrs. *Martha* to the wood, at the extremity of which she pointed out to me her boasted nest—the birds nest I mean—The tree where it was, grows on the side of a shady lane, much such a one, I suppose, as *Chamont* pursued his journey in. What put me in mind of his description, was the appearance of a wrungled hag, who desisted from picking dry sticks, in order to tell my ladyship's fortune. I diverted myself for some time with the unintelligible gibberish of this descendant of *Cleopatra*—*Martha*, however, drew my attention from the interesting scene in which I was engaged, to what was equally so, viz. the survey of her young favourites—Horrid, cry'd I, with a scream, they look like frogs—I would not touch them for the world; let them alone—and turn'd from her, singing,

'They ne'er could be true, she'd aver,

That could rob a poor bird of its young—
And I lik'd her the more when I heard

Such tenderness fall from her tongue:—

When chancing to cast my eyes towards the lane, what was my surprize, at the sight of a gay young gentleman, who had brought his horse close up to the hedge that separated

us, and was looking at me with the greatest attention! a servant in a smart livery, though at a greater distance, following his master's example—At that instant there was no occasion

To teach the cheek the hidden blush to show,
Or little hearts to flutter at a Beau;

for mine did so without the word of command—A pretty fellow, after three months banishment from the beau monde, was become a kind of novelty to me, and might well, by so unexpected an appearance, cause an emotion—I blushed, then, I say, and, abruptly breaking off my unfinished song, with a pretty kind of rural rusticity, took to my heels, and fled, like *Daphne*, over the plains; while my *Apollo* very gallantly leaped his horse, though at the danger of his neck, which was spared, perhaps, for a more exalted fate, over the intervening hedge—What obstacles will not love conquer?—And dismounting, as soon as he had performed that feat of activity, left his horse, and followed me on foot, entreating me, in the most supplicating voice, to stop, and permit him to apologize for his having been the unfortunate, though innocent, cause of alarming me. I looked back at that instant, and was highly diverted at the sight of honest *Martha*, who was hobbling after me, with a face extended to an enormous length, not doubting, I suppose, but her long preserved, and never before

fore attempted, virtue, was, at last, going to become a sacrifice to that odious creature man; she came up to me, and stammering for want of breath, Lord, Madam, cried she, what will become of us?—I do not know, answered I, smiling—What, said the Gipsy? —Did she not forewarn you of this disaster? —As I spoke, the Gentleman joined us; a stile was to be scrambled over—he offered his hand; I accepted of it—he spoke—music was in his voice—elegance and beauty in his form and face—Much gallantry and politeness on his part; civility, and a proper reserve, on mine. He sued for the liberty of escorting me home—

How could I prevent it, the roads being free—
For one as for t'other, for him as for me.—

I was, however, a little mortified at the humble appearance of my habitation—and, with a double chin, and head erect, sailed into it with a stately air, leaving him convinced, as I hoped, both from my behaviour and conversation, that I had been accustomed to a more sumptuous dwelling—His adieu was to the highest degree respectful—a sigh—a gentle pressure of my hand; eyes turned back, and slow reluctant steps, testified how unwilling he was to leave me—An amazing pretty fellow—Love is a capricious Deity—In an assembly I might have passed unnoticed by him—but had my figure been but barely passable, the very circumstances of my retirement, of my genteel appearance, and a

manner that testified an acquaintance with the world, carried a sort of mystery with it, that could not fail to excite his attention—And, after all, I believe the country is the place, to which *Cupid*, finding himself neglected, for the sake of interest in the beau monde, has retired. If so, and that, by his influence, my stranger should condescend to turn shepherd for his *Delia's* sake, I shall begin to be reconciled to what, till this auspicious day, was so greatly my aversion—I diverted my Mamma with my little adventure, and *Martha's* fears on the occasion, which, I tell her, she is greatly disappointed to find so groundless—I have rallied her a good deal on this head. The honest virgin seems but half delighted with my jokes, but dares not testify any resentment, as I immediately begin to console her for the mortification she has suffered, by giving her hopes, that the next will end more to her satisfaction—Mamma cannot resist a smile at my pleasantry; while her hand-maid lifts up her hands and eyes, praying for my conversion, and declaring that mine is all wicked and unsanctified wit, of which she hopes, ere long, to see me heartily repent; then she quotes texts of Scripture against jestings that are not convenient—A droll creature, but honest and well meaning. Adieu, *Dorinda*, if I hear no more of my swain, my next will, I fear, be in the *affettuoso* strain—Yours sincerely,

DELIA STANHOPE.

LETTER III.

To the SAME

H OPE, thou hast told me lies from day to day—Not a word of this swain since I last wrote—Stupid wretch—How dearly these men love to give themselves airs—Had you seen his behaviour to me, you would have sworn the wound I had given was incurable—And love at first sight, everlasting unconquerable love, is the very law and gospel of Romances; What modern fair one doubts their infallibility in affairs of this nature?—While I was fluttered at every noise I heard, believing it to be some trusty Squire fraught with a tender billet-doux from my Knight, or perhaps bringing the melancholy tidings of his death, which even so short an absence from his *Dulcinea*, so desperate are the wounds she gives, had already effected, the honest man, no doubt, was pursuing his journey with all the sober sadness imaginable, unconscious of the mischeif he had made—This disappointment has quite disconcerted my plan; already had I fixed on a shady wood where to indulge my meditations, as lovers are wont on the same occasions; already had I purchased a sharp pointed penknife, at no small cost, of honest *Martha*, a present, as she, fighing, told me, in the days of yore, from the only sweetheart Heaven had ever blest her with.—Beware, ye Lovers,

Lovers, how ye receive such fatal presents—This instrument had I procured, to carve his dear name on the bark of trees; already had I effayed my skill; but since my *Aeneas* is fled, what is now left me but to follow the example of the forsaken *Dido*, and, instead of engraving his name on trees, turn the fell knife against my own breast, and there erase his image from my heart—Miracles are not yet ceas'd. Would you believe it, *Dorinda's* visitors are below—but of what kind do you think? Not powdered Fops, nor gaudy Belles, but a sober Country Parson and his daughter—The former a pains-taking man, who talks me a sleep every *Sunday*, and himself into a consumption: his daughter I have never yet seen, she having been upon a visit to her grandmother, or aunt;—no matter which.—But I guess what kind of a mortal it is—A well grown vegetable, who, being once rooted in her chair, will not dare to move any thing but her eyes. I think I see her awkward confusion, when I burst in upon her with all the insolence of town-bred dignity—Adieu, I am going to make the experiment.

Thursday Evening, Nine o'Clock.

O Lord! my dear, would you believe it, I never was more humbled in my life—Stay; I must look in the glass; surely she's not so much handiomer than me—Let me see; O, pretty well; yes I think my countenance is rather more expressive—Could you imagine

it

it possible, *Dorinda*, this Parson's daughter, instead of the stupid rustic I expected, is—female envy be gone—alas! my dear she's beautiful as an Angel, sensible, and even learned, but without pedantry, modest and humble, but neither bashful nor awkward. How, in the name of Fortune, could she acquire all these perfections?—Such a father, such an education as she must have had!—Let me die, if I do not look upon her as a prodigy; Mamma is charmed with her, so am I, more perhaps than I desire.—But to be serious, for with all my faults, I believe you'll do me the justice to acknowledge, I am as free from envy as most of my sex, and as frank in confessing another's excellence; to be serious, then I say, I am in raptures with the lovely *Emilia*, for that is the fair one's name, and promise myself much pleasure from her acquaintance; there is such an air of innocence and sincerity in her countenance, something so insinuating in her manners, that I am convinced she is capable of friendship, which is the highest encomium I can bestow on her—Then her conversation, tho' grave, is uncommonly sentimental and refined. Amongst her other good qualities, I greatly admire her respectful behaviour to the honest old man her father, who, tho' none of the brightest genius's, is not only venerable for his age, and the sacred character he bears, but from his unaffected piety, which be inforses, however, much more by his irreproachable life, than his preaching; not

not being endued with any great share of eloquence, his sermons would be apt to excite a smile ; did he harangue a more polite audience, the Smarts of the age would be rather witty on the occasion ! but amongst his simple and well-meaning parishioners he is loved as a father, and respected as a tearcher of truths, sacred and important, as they really are. With all my gaiety, I have ever had courage enough, in spite of ridicule, to profess myself a Christian; tho' my religion dwells rather in my heart than on my tongue. I despise the ostentatious devotion of a Devotee ; tho', when called upon, shall never be backward to give a reason for the hope that is in me —Amazing—Here's gravity for you—But no wonder, the company of this afternoon naturally led me to the subject, and I seldom check my pen, but communicate my thoughts freely as they occur ; the least restraint on this head, would soon destroy my fondness for writing ; to a friend this employment is nothing more than thinking aloud—A sagacious remark this, and perfectly new—I need not tell you, I suppose, that I never study to compose fine or witty letters. Very unsuccesful, you will say if I do—No, my dear, I never study at all, neither upon this or any other occasion ; both my speech and actions are extempore—But where have I wandered ?—Let me say a few words more of my new favourite. After tea, on my requesting it, she accompanied me on a ramble. Various were the topics

topics of our conversation; you know the frankness of my disposition, of which the many false, though pretended friends, I have met with, have not been able to cure me—Not a secret should I have concealed from her, tho' on so short an acquaintance, had I been possessed of any—But I found the sweet *Emilia* rather more reserved—Love had a share in our conference—Were ever two females five minutes together without touching on that subject?—She blushed; she sighed; and, in short, in spite of herself, discovered what she endeavoured to conceal. This accounts for a kind of langour and melancholy which I took notice of from the first—What else could occasion it, but this said Love, the disturber of high and of low—A charming foundation this for our future friendship, which would be insipid without a passion ever new, and ever interesting. Nothing is now wanting but a swain for your friend—Stupid wretch, you know who I mean. *Emilia* has it seems, lived chiefly with an aunt at Oxford. Alas! poor *Emilia*! some smart student, I warrant—but I shall know all in good time. She is but just returned from that place.—Adieu, my dear, and good night—Would you believe a fine Lady could think of going to rest at such an unfashionable hour as ten o'clock!—Hideous! to have none but the vulgar to countenance one's example. I must submit, however, as such

such are the laws of our regular family.
Again then, I blushing, faulter out good
night.

DELIA STANHOPE.

LETTER IV.

To the SAME.

SUNDAY, just preparing for church, as
neat as a bride, yet I am sure the lovely
Emilia will eclipse me—no matter, who
would contend for the stupid gaping admira-
tion of clowns?—The bell rings—Adieu.

One o'Clock.

Heart palpitating, cheeks blushing, and de-
votion disturbed. “Lead us not into temp-
“tations;” yet how are they to be avoided,
since the most sacred places are not a security
against them—Mr. *Jeffey* never preached a
shorter sermon in his life, at least it appeared so
to me, tho’ several sleek headed swains, accord-
ing to their usual custom, composed them-
selves to rest, till their drowsy pates nodding
against each other, up they start, and apply-
ing large doses of snuff to their nostrils tuck-
ing at the same time their lank hair behind
their ears, again they prepare to listen, till
a second drowsy fit seizing them, then down
they

they sink once more to a happy oblivion of all their cares— How often have I diverted myself with observing them. But this morning a far more interesting object employed my attention.— Have you sagacity enough to guess who he was?—O Heavens! what a charming figure!—*Emilia* and I sat together; she all composure and attention; my eyes a little inclined to wander: In consequence of which, who should I see parading into the church, with a dignity that, besides the elegance of his dress, struck the whole audience with awe and wonderment: no less than the handsome stranger, who has, for some time past, been the subject of my pen!—A most violent palpitation, you may believe—I pulled *Emilia* by the sleeve, and directed her eyes where he was—She seemed in the utmost surprize, blushed excessively, and a moment after turned as pale as death—I thought she would have fainted. She was actually obliged to sit down, and have recourse to her salts—What was I to think of all this?—The beau too, towards whom I could not help stealing a glance now and then, appeared embarrassed, and seemed cautious of looking to where I was— Mean time *Emilia* recovered, but never raised her eyes during the remainder of the service; frequent sighs, however, escaped her, and an air of more than usual melancholy took place in her countenance. There is a mystery in their behaviour, which I am dying
to

to unravel. Pray Heaven, there be not too good an understanding between them, to leave room for me to hope. The little vanity his presence had excited, and the belief that my fair self had procured us his company, now changed into humility; for had I not reason to think the too charming *Emilia* was, in reality the object of his pursuit?—I was impatient till Mr. *Jeffey* dismissed us; though, as I before said, his discourse seemed less tedious than usual, having so gay an object to divert my attention. We received, at last, the Benediction, and made our exit—The stranger met us at the door; *Emilia* had hold of my arm; I felt her tremble as he approached; again she blushed, and betrayed manifest signs of agitation. He spoke not to her, however, nor testified the least acquaintance; but to me he vouchsafed a most respectful bow, and, with more haste than I thought necessary—(for, good man, handsome as he is, there was no danger of my running away with him)—mounting his horse, which a servant was waiting with at the entrance of the church-yard, away he flew like lightning. A wretch! what brought him here, I wonder, to disturb a sett of honest people, and divert them from their duty?—I could not, for some time, get the better of a something—a new kind of sensation, which his presence, or his sudden absence, I do not know which to ascribe it to, had excited. Even my curiosity was not prevalent enough.

enough to make me break silence. I found myself in a sort of disagreeable resverie; neither was the fair *Jessy* more communicative—We walked a good way without speaking to each other till the sight of her house at some distance waked me from my penfive fit; and I asked her, with a forced smile, what she thought of the stranger;—What do you think of him, rather? returned she; for, if I am not mistaken, he has for some time been the object of your meditation—I may suppose the same of you, said I; but, for my part, I shall make no scruple of declaring, that I think him an immense pretty fellow—His outward appearance I mean. But you, added I, with an arch look, could, I fancy, give me his character with more certainty.—Why so? cry'd she, in some coufusion—Ah, my dear, I find I have not yet merited your confidence, nor could I, indeed, justly expect it from so short an acquaintance; yet I will venture to say—Excuse me, interrupted she, with a sigh—It gives me pain to be accused of reserve, but for pity's fake, spare me on this fatal subject. I am a very unhappy creature, my dear *Miss Stanhope*. I know I shall excite your compassion, were I to tell you, but I cannot; the recollection of past scenes only augments my misery—Oh, then, ask me not the cause—I will not, said I, since you say it gives you pain—Yet I think the cause is no longer a mystery—You may be mistaken, resumed she; the person you suspect, it is true, knows some part

part—But forgive me, if you have any regard for my peace, never again lead me to this cruel subject—My misfortunes will not admit of consolation, all prospect of happiness is fled, and my peace of mind is lost for ever. I assured her, in the strongest terms, I would never hereafter give her uneasiness on that head, nor will I forfeit my promise—Impertinent female curiosity, begone---I am pleased, however, that by the hint she dropped, I have reason to believe that the stranger is not the principal object of her concern---Do you think it was lover like to leave his mistress so abruptly ; I would hope not---Yet the very objection I make against his being her swain, holds equally good in regard to myself ; for, cou'd he, you may as justly ask, love the fair *Delia*, yet take his flight with such precipitation?---Why no, I fear not ; however, like me or not, it would be some consolation to know that I had no rival---This talking of rivals looks very suspicious ; I will consult my heart, some day or other, when I have leisure, and examine how it stands affected towards this charming opposition, which appears only to alarm, and vanishes without explaining itself.

I have been for some time prevented from finishing my epistle, by the communicative Mrs. *Martha*, who bringing a message to me from mamma, and always delighted to hear herself talk, began a conversation about *Emilia*, in hopes of learning something of what I wished

wish'd to know---A very female still, you find, in regard to curiosity--- I suffered her to proceed, but not a word could I collect to satisfy it---All I heard was high encomiums on her piety, charity, and other virtues, which *Martha* says is the talk of the whole parish, where she is almost ador'd. She has many suitors, added the honest virgin, but cannot affect any of them; and it is marvellous to see how coy she'll be, tho' they are personable young men, and some of them deadly well to pass in the world---Oh, *Martha*, cry'd I smiling, how feelingly you speak! What would you give to be in her place? The plump soul tossed up her head vex'd at my remark, and left me in a pet---Adieu, *Dorinda*; if you love me, let your letters be more frequent---Such subjects as you have to amuse both your self and me: How can you excuse your laziness? Do not you again give me cause to chide you on that head, as you value the esteem of your

DELIA STANHOPE.

L E T.

LETTER V.

To the SAME.

EVERY thing in *statu quo*—in regard to *Emilia*, your friend, and the insensible wretch, whom I have scarce patience to mention; that is to say, *Emilia's* history, though I see her daily, is still a secret—Your *Delia* is still affected with a certain passion; and the swain is still, the the Lord knows where—at *Jericbo*, I hope, by this time—Yet some little variety I have met with since I last wrote, by the arrival of — no Beau, you may believe, or my letter would have begun in a different manner—Only females, but passable. I fancy I shall think them tolerable in time; they already profess a high esteem for my Ladyship; no more than my due, that you know. Shall I give you a more particular account of them; yes, I think I will. Know then, that about three weeks ago, lodgings were taken at one of the best farm-houses in the village, for a Lady and her daughter; the former ordered by her Physicians to this part of the country, for the benefit of the air, it being, it seems, reckoned extremely healthy, pure, and I don't know what all. An odious place for all that—Well, they came, mamma civil and sociable; paid them a visit, I too was obliged to accompany her; we went, were politely received;

ceived ; the old Dowager immensely well-bred ; has lived in *London*, it seems ; no great appearance of ill-health that I could discover, but plump and well favour'd ; vapourish, I'll warrant—Who would not be a fine Lady you know. Her daughter—*assez bien*—Tall, genteel, face passable, an understanding about the common size of Ladies ; laughs rather too often, and not always in the right place ; but upon the whole may have her admirers. *Emilia* has likewise been to see them, and Miss *Charlton* is sometimes admitted of our party in our evening rambles. She's apt to give herself a few airs, but not elegant ones—Talks in raptures of *London* balls, operas, and plays ; says *B.* in the neighbourhood of which the estate of her late father lies, and where they have chiefly resided since his death, is a very gay town, a great deal of good company, a number of beaux ; she loves, I find, to talk of those dear creatures ; what female does not ?—Wishes mamma would take a house, and remove there, should be immensely happy in my company. The damsel is not very sparing of her flattery ; women are accused of a fondness for that ; 'tis a proof of it, that rather than not have it at all, they will even condescend to flatter one another ; but to me it is odious, except from the other sex, and even in that case horrid, if not exceedingly delicate and refined—Adieu.

DELIA STANHOPE.

L E T-

LETTER VI.

To the SAME.

VERY civil; very obliging. Mrs. *Charlton* insists on my accompanying her to *B.* for a few weeks. Says, it will be a little variety for me—At my time of life to be secluded from the world must be very disagreeable—A sagacious old Lady—intreats mamma to give her consent to my going with them. I begin to like her immensely. They leave the country in a day or two. Mamma deliberates, asks what I would chuse to do? Just as she pleases, is my pretty passive answer. To say truth, though I should like to change the scene, yet the thoughts of leaving her, is an alloy to the pleasure I might promise myself from the journey. Honest *Martha* is point blank against it, terrified at the danger my soul will run, in being again exposed to the tempting pomps and vanities of a wicked world—A very sagacious and weighty objection. Yet, I believe, Mrs *Charlton* will carry the day—I am sent for—that Lady and her daughter are below. Adieu.

Saturday, Three o'Clock.

They came off with flying colours—Mamma could no longer resist their eloquence. Next Monday morning we begin our journey. I should have told you, that Mrs. *Charlton* has,

has, by the six weeks residence she has made here, entirely got the better of what I am still inclined to call her imaginary complaint ---*Miss*, on the contrary, has acquired one, which only a return to town can cure ; that is to say, she is heartily sick of the country. They appear to be people of condition, keep their carriage, and are, I find, related to several families of distinction---Upon the whole, I fancy I shall have no reason to regret their coming amongst us. The young Lady, too, upon a more intimate acquaintance, is rather more agreeable than I at first thought her, though amazingly inferior, in merit and understanding, to my lovely rural friend---The dear creature---I am half melancholy at the thoughts of leaving her. Mamma too---Yet, for so short an absence---Come, I will endeavour to get the better of it, and look forward to scenes more suited to my taste, than the late dreary ones I have been engaged in. Adieu. I must make preparations for my journey. My next will be from *B*, if no unforeseen accident intervenes to disappoint my going.
yours,

DELIA STANHOPE.

C L E T.

LETTER VII.

To the SAME.

O This will never do? even solitude is preferable to such company---How few people know that easy unconstrained manner, which alone can make a visit agreeable. Mrs. *Charlton* has every thing she can wish for, but a disposition, or rather capacity, to enjoy her good fortune---She is perpetually complaining of imaginary ailments, and spends immense sums on pretended cures, that, in reality, destroy her constitution. I have never known a cheerful moment since I have been with them---A pair of insipid souls, who have no taste or relish for any thing---With understandings so barren, that, were it not for cards, there would be no possibility of huddling over the tedious day. How little are we able to judge of people from a slight acquaintance. This boasted town, too---amazingly gay, to be sure---A parcel of old Dowagers and superannuated Virgins---and for Beaux---the Lord defend me from the wicked idea of them---Card-parties without measure or end. Scandal amongst the former, and hideous common-place compliments from the latter—I have discovered Mrs. *Charlton* to be peevish, envious and proud; the daughter, whom she idolizes, vain, pert, and silly---Their politeness to me is teasingly ceremonious---They keep an elegant table, but you may

may observe that they make it too much their study to have it so, and that not out of respect to me, but through an ostentatious parade of their riches. Their plate and finery is displayed, in order to raise my opinion of their importance! A very unlikely method, if they knew my disposition. I can see, too, that they experience a silly and mean pride in the consciousness of their superior fortunes---I am teased to death with impudent apologies for the defect of their entertainments; though they are sensible that, since my father's death, at least, I have not been accustomed to such profusion---On these occasions, however, instead of the compliments they expect, I never fail to mortify them, by an air of indifference and inattention? declaring coolly that I am very easily pleased---What they complain of is not so much amiss---Why will they put me in mind that I am a stranger, when they are hourly bidding me consider myself as at home. Another disagreeable circumstance is, that through their mistaken civility, they never suffer me to be a moment by myself---I would leave them immediately, could I invent any plausible pretence, but cannot be guilty of rudeness, and my fatal promise extended to six weeks at least---What an age!---Positively, *Dorinda*, if things continue in the train they have for some months past, I shall turn a snarling misanthrope, and rail at all men; nor shall I be very sparing of my own sex---I am violently low-spirited to-day---Would I were in

a desert---One of this joyous family is a poor unhappy girl, who, from some degree of affluence, is reduced to the state of a toad-eater to this well tempered Dowager and her fair daughter---I am disgusted, nay, shocked, at their treatment of her!---Heaven defend me from dependence! all other ills I could, in comparison, patiently endure---

Dear Liberty, 'tis Liberty alone,
That gives fresh beauty to the sun.

The old Lady is sometimes in a very friendly, mood, forsooth, and on these occasions is violently sorry for my change of fortune, and insolently compassionate---Then her wise advice is to be given in regard to my conduct---For a young person without fortune, am I not rather too much of a fine Lady?---The world is very censorious---Men are more prudent now a-days, than formerly; beauty alone will make but little impression on them ---Then, too, extravagance in dress is bad policy; in mine they think some reformation might be made, and I should really look handsomer if I would put on my cloaths according to their elegant directions---The daughter is very eloquent on this subject---Pity it is who speaks so well, should ever speak in vain---But their artifice won't pass upon me. I see their drift, and count their censure fame---The good souls are labouring in vain to make me disguise myself---It must

be owned, indeed, she has not been very discreet in the choice of a foil to the charms of her daughter; yet so fully persuaded are they both of her beauty, that nothing but the superior homage that is paid me by the few insignificant beauxs of the place, could have convinced them it was possible to excel her---Amongst the men I am an universal toast and favourite, and as universally disliked by the younger part of the females---Dear creatures! how cordially they hate me---The poor misses! I could almost pity them: but had they the presumption to imagine their country airs would attract, where I display'd my superior graces!--Heavens! *Dorinda*, it would make you die with laughing, could you see what a sett of auwkard imitators I have got: My air, my dress, my very foibles copied, by those who, at the same time, pretend to find fault with every thing I do---This is a most joyous circumstance, and gives me infinite amusement---Next week the assemblies are to begin, and continue once a fortnight during the winter, which begins already to give some dreary forebodings of its approach; then will be my time for exhibition, but that not out of a desire to please; mistake me not; but from a less laudable motive, even the dear spiteful pleasure of seeing a sett of dozen'd-out damsels breaking their hearts through envy---How will their round unthinking faces be lengthened, when, with all the graces of careless elegance, I fail in amongst them,

them, with an air so negligent, so easy, and inattentive--- You know my method, when I have a mind to be saucy ; and you know, too, that is not seldom the case--- Then, for dress ---my virgin white, or laylock *negligée*, in preference to the rest, large and flowing--- My ornaments few, but well chosen, in opposition to that Babel that the country Misses, with infinite labour and inelegance, erect upon their heads, crowding the out-side to make some amends for the emptiness of the in---

With flowers on flowers they build their heads
before,

And mount them to a formidable tower ;
In front gigantic, but survey'd behind,
Their size is dwindled to the pigmy kind.

Amazing, that I have so long been freed
from the impertinence of Miss *Charlton*---
but I hear somebody on the stairs---'tis she,
and I must hasten to conclude my epistle.
Adieu.

DELIA STANHOPE.

L E T-

LETTER VIII.

To the SAME.

A Letter from my dear *Emilia*--Read it--
The amiable girl--how is her loveliness
and sweetness of disposition endeared to me
since I have been amongst these----but I
won't call names--they are below my censure.

LETTER

To Miss DELLA STANHOPE.

" CAN my dear *Miss Stanhope* spare time
" from her more lively amusements to read
" a few lines from *Emilia*? Have the gay
" pleasures of a town life effaced the remem-
" brance of her rustic friend, and the serene
" joys which she partook with her at *A?*
" Are the humble villagers, and their native
" simplicity, now contemned, for the courtly
" insincerity of the Beau-monde?---Oh, my
" dear *Delia*, is it possible, that, with your
" sentiment and refined taste, you should be
" insensible to the genuine beauties of Na-
" ture, which are so enchantingly displayed
" in the country, and prefer the noise and
" hurry of a town, to the peaceful, heart-
" felt joys of friendship and retirement? Yet
" far be it from me to lessen, by my compa-
" risons, your present situation. I hope you

“ are happy, and have been able to select
“ from the crowd some few worthy your
“ esteem. Though I am passionately fond
“ of the country, yet, without society, even
“ that would be deprived of half its charms :
“ Your absence has more than ever convinced
“ me how necessary it is to our felicity. The
“ delightful walks, where we have so often
“ strayed, are no longer the same ; your
“ sprightly, your animated conversation is
“ wanting—The approach of winter, too,
“ begins to rob the blooming wilderness of
“ its sweets, yet makes but slow and reluct-
“ ant advances, as if unwilling to destroy the
“ exquisite beauties which summer has in-
“ such profusion, scattered over the face of
“ Nature. The weather is still fine enough
“ to indulge me in my favourite evening
“ rambles, in which your amiable mamma
“ frequently honours me with her company
“ ---How edifying is her conversation ! I
“ never leave her without an increasing re-
“ lish for piety and virtue---With all your
“ gaiety and spirit, the goodness of your heart
“ speaks the efficacy of her forcible precepts
“ and example---Shall I be free with my
“ friend, without her being offended at my
“ sincerity ? You are better than you wish
“ to appear ; you fear to be unfashionably
“ good, and therefore affect some foibles,
“ and little imperfections, which are not
“ natural to your disposition---With a heart
“ so tender, so susceptible of every noble im-
“ pression,

“ pression, you have adopted the character
“ of what is called a fine Lady, not without
“ a great mixture of coquetry, which, I
“ suppose, indeed, is the principal ingredient
“ in the composition. It must be owned, no
“ body can support it with more grace and
“ spirit; but consider, my dear, that this
“ has been attempted, and not unsuccessful-
“ ly neither, by women of very moderate
“ genius and capacity; and you, I am con-
“ vinced, were intended by Nature for a
“ much superior character---Excuse this li-
“ berty, which flows from my affection---I
“ have no notion of a flattering friend; how
“ should I, since they are, in reality, incom-
“ patible---Sincerity, frankness, and unreserv-
“ ed confidence, are the very soul of friend-
“ ship. Alas! my dear, accuse me not of
“ a breach in the latter---My grief preys
“ upon my heart---Let it do so; I will not
“ give pain to others, by exciting their sym-
“ pathizing sorrow---No, I will be a miser
“ of my woes---It is consuming me by slow
“ degrees; my health is visibly impaired---
“ But adieu, my dear, this subject is too
“ melancholy for us both. Believe me ever
“ yours.

EMILIA JESSEY.”

Sweet girl! how sincerely am I affected
with her sorrows, even without knowing the
cause! Who deserves to be happy, since she,
with every amiable perfection, every virtue,

is not so---What think you of her sentiments in regard to my Lady-ship ?---A high, and, I fear, undeserved encomium, and a too just reproof; but there is no remedy; custom is a second nature, you know, and has dubb'd me a fine Lady; not a Coquette, though, I hope---Yes, I fear even a little of that, too, for life---In the country a simple unaffected carriage may do well enough; but there is no bustling through the Beau-monde with any distinction, without a few airs and graces; Appear to have a good opinion of yourself, and others will have the same. Adieu. yours,

DELIA STANHOPE.

LETTER IX.

To the SAME.

JUST preparing for the Assembly---Look amazingly---Hair french'd---Face animated with the dear hopes of conquest---Eyes sparkling---every feature alive---and for what? you'll ask---Are such unimportant conquests worth your pains?---No, my dear, positively no---But then the dear pleasure of exciting envy---Don't shake your wise head, and condemn my conduct---'Tis determined the blood should vanish from the cheek, and all their fainter beauties die before the resplendent blaze of my eclipsing charms---Somebody

body says, "Envy, to small or little minds,
" is-----" I forget what---Rather unsuccessful in my attempted quotation ---But no matter; let the Poet say what he will, Envy is what we, one and all, love to excite, in regard to our beauty; and that I shall excite it, all Nature cries aloud, for I am positively dressed for execution--And look--But here comes Miss Charlton, sinking under a load of ill chosen finery; languid and fatigued with the important labours of the toilette.

Ready to die with laughing---The dear spiteful creature!---Do you remember a comedy call'd *The Lady's Friendship?*-- One scene of it has been inimitably performed between Miss Charlton and me---She has been displaying her talent in criticism on the important-articles of dress, and would fain have made some improvements, as she was pleased to call them, on mine; but I cordially thank'd her for her well-meant civility; chose, however, to continue in *statu quo*--- The poor girl grew pale as she looked over my shoulder, and compared our faces in the glass---Let me die if she was not ready to cry with vexation---What a triumph for me!--- I shall certainly grow vain---She is gone, for consolation, to her mamma, who will, I hope, flatter her into a better opinion of herself--- O woman! woman!---But I stop---Reflections would, I fear, come with but an indifferent grace from me, who am, alas, as mere

a woman

a woman as the best of us---Adieu---A summons to the parlour---The coach is at the door.

DELIA STANHOPE.

LETTER X.

To the SAME.

Thursday Morning.

O Heavens ! such an enchanting creature ! ---Ease, elegance, taste, wit---A form lovely beyond description---Eyes, teeth, and hair---And then the *tout ensemble*---O too much, too much in all conscience---My half-closed wound bleeds afresh---Smote, irrecoverably smote---But listen---Went to the Assembly ; wretched figures male and female ; some glimmerings of taste though ; the former I mean. Divine creature ! in a buzzing whisper from every mouth on my entrance---The latter fluttered fans, and bridled chins ; minuets began, birth claims a precedence in them before beauty, two or three damsels of some quality had already exhibited, when in came---O heavens !---No less than the---What epithets shall I make use of to convey an idea of him ! lovely, blooming, sprightly, animated, will these do ?---No, he beggars all description ; but in short, the angelic apparition that has twice before disturbed my rest, and now a third view, elegantly dressed, has

has absolutely completed my distraction--With what a graceful ease did he make his entry, distinguished amongst the other beaux by his superior dignity of aspect---He stood like *Saul* among the people---Every female heart in a flutter, while envy and conscious inferiority sunk at once the aspiring hopes of the surrounding youths; the Master of the Ceremonies singled him out immediately, the Misses watched his motions; we saw he was going to dance--- But with whom--- Fired with ambition to be distinguished by an object so perfect, every eye was eagerly turned towards him, suing to be the happy she--- He moved forwards. Miss *Charlton*, on pretence of speaking to the Lady who sat on the other side of me, endeavoured to prevent my being seen, by bending forward; but in spite of her efforts, it was not a total eclipse; he saw, he flew to me with an air of transport--- What was my triumph when he led me forth!---Such a minuet, and how many soft compliments did he whisper as he lead me to my seat!---He stood by me some time after it was over---I put him in mind it was customary for the Gentlemen to dance two--- He condescended to ask me to direct his choice ---I glanced my eye towards Miss *Charlton*--- Naturally compassionate, you know, I pitied the mortification she visibly suffered on my being preferred to her; and, to make her some amends, procured her the envied honour

a woman as the best of us---Adieu---A summons to the parlour---The coach is at the door.

DELIA STANHOPE.

LETTER X.

To the SAME.

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nour of being his next partner---Her clouded countenance brightned up, hope revived, and she tripped to the upper end of the room with no ill grace---She really does not dance inelegantly---I was a little alarmed, when my beau, on her resuming her seat, ask'd me, in a whisper, who she was?---I really felt myself blush, and was not half pleased with the question---Heavens! *Dorinda*, had he chose her for the remainder of the evening, I should certainly have expired with vexation; but my apprehensions were groundless; my propitious stars had decreed that honour for my Ladyship----Could it be otherwise?---But I am apt to have too humble an opinion of myself----I give frequent proofs of that, you know---Well, we danced country-dances---Ease, elegance, and life, in all his motions---The men endeavoured at aukward imitation; the ladies forgot both figure and partner ---Lost in the pleasure of gazing at him, how ready were their hands when his were offered!--On his part, smiles of complacency; and, I believe, a gentle pressure now and then, out of mere compassion---The dear creature! I'll take my death he is a charming fellow! ---Gave myself a few airs; frequently sat down; too delicate to follow the example of the robust country damsels---And then he talk'd, O heavens! how he talk'd---Return'd home, totally engrossed by the idea of my lovely partner---Hardly closed my eyes the whole night; and when I did, saw *Hymen* lighting

lighting his torch, and *Cupid* selecting his keenest arrows; both employed in my service---Charming visions: When will they be realized---I have learnt the name of my *Adonis*---Rather too effeminate an appellation; but let it pass---His name is *Mountague*: A noble name!---I could find in my heart to change even that of *Stanhope* for it, were he to employ his eloquence on that head * * * * *

Nay, this is too much---Absolutely bent on my destruction---Is it in woman to resist that equipage, were the master of it ever such a -----? But here comes Miss *Charlton*, fluttered to death, out of breath, with emotion---Not half decorated for such an unexpected visitor---Screaming for her *Abigail*---My blond cap---My pink ruff---The girl hurrying backwards and forwards to obey her more hurrying commands---Poor Miss *Charlton*!----But I must leave her: Love and *Mountague* demand my presence---I come---Who could resist those powerful calls?

Thurday, Two o'Clock.

A short *tête à tête* with my swain before my female friends made their appearance---Delicate compliments on his part, spirited answers on mine---By degrees I changed the conversation to my manner of living at *A*---He rallied me agreeably on our first encounter---Said I was a perfect *Atalanta* at a race---Having engaged him thus far, on a topic which

which you may gues's my reasons for starting, I slyly mentioned the lovely *Emilia*, as a Lady with whom he seem'd to have some acquaintance---He changed colour, faltered in his answer---Said he had indeed a confused idea of his having seen her somewhere before, but where he could not recollect---I look'd steadfastly at him; while he spoke, his eyes seem'd to shun mine---Guilty, I fear---Bad symptoms, these---Perhaps the place you saw her at was *Oxford*, said I, smiling a little archly. He started, and could not command a too visible agitation. *Oxford!* Madam, repeated he, nothing more likely, I was at that university ---Did your friend live there? Yes, Sir---And told you she had seen me at that place? I am much obliged to her for honouring me with a place in her memory---I cannot say I should have been grâeful enough to have returned the compliment, had I not accidentally seen her with you at church. She's very pretty, added he, with a careless air. Rather more than pretty, returned I; I think her perfectly lovely---But we'll drop the subject, if you please; 'tis rather impertinent, since I find I have been mistaken in believing she had the honour to be known to you. I spoke this with some degree of archness, but he seemed not to observe it. Having recovered the command of himself, he answered, with an appearance of unconcern, that though he might have seen her, he had not the pleasure of being of her acquaintance---Nothing like telling

telling a fib with a good grace---Not the least knowledge of her, to be sure---Wits have short memories, you know---Poor *Emilia*!---Something very mysterious in all this! yet why mysterious; inconstancy in love no new thing, I trow---Liked her, I suppose, in his boyhood; that critical æra past, reason takes its turn to reign, and calm indifference succeeds---Yet I must repeat poor *Emilia*, if she still loves him---Constancy is a virtue peculiar to our sex; I pity her from my soul; and if I thought there was any possibility of her reclaiming her wanderer, would absolutely sacrifice my dawning passion to friendship's nobler claim---I am not an ungenerous creature, with all my foibles; but then the disparity of their rank and fortune, the opposition of his friends, and, above all, the settled coldness that has visibly succeeded his flame; I see she ought not to cherish the least hopes of regaining him; and should not I take warning by her fate, this proof of his inconstancy!----His natural disposition I fear----What can I promise myself from his attachment to me, superior in nothing but birth, to his more amiable forsaken *Emilia*. But then the pleasure of engrossing the attention of an object so much admired, to be followed, flattered; no man ever flattered so agreeably; to have half my sex dying with envy at the attraction of my superior charms---No, it is not in nature, I positively cannot give up those dear, those desirable privileges, let

let the consequences be what they will---But before I proceed too far, I will endeavour to persuade my friend to an unreserved confidence; if she will not trust me, who wish not to know her secrets but for her own sake, then must she take the consequence of her unjust reserve. How these grave reflections have led me from the subject I intended to have entertained you with! After them, I feel it impossible to resume it with any degree of spirit. I shall only say, that his visit, upon the whole, was infinitely agreeable. I believe Miss *Charlton* was scarce less pleased with it than myself; though she engrossed but the second part of his attention, yet the share he honoured her with, for he is perfectly gallant and well-bred, has put her into such a flow of spirits, that I am convinced she does not despair of supplanting me---Let her think so still, till the broad shame comes staring in her face---For my share, I have no apprehensions of that nature---Her mamma, too, speaks highly of our guest---No wonder, for he has that easy, that insinuating manner, that must take with every age and sex. You would have smiled to see, with what obliging and attentive gravity he listened to the old Lady's catalogue of imaginary ailments; I am convinced he has a tender heart, for he even seemed to sympathize with her---To her daughter, on the contrary, he was all gaiety and sprightliness; he has a genius for every thing, even small talk; he condescended to
her

her capacity, and trifled with her with inimitable grace---But to me--O to be sure--his conversation was in a superior strain--Refined, sentimental, witty---An enchanting creature, upon the whole, deny it who dare--Nothing but parties of pleasure talked of. I am become visibly of more importance in this family since the arrival of my beau---Who can resist his example? Adieu.

DELIA STANHOPE.

L E T T E R XI.

To the SAME.

Monday Morning, seven o'Clock.

CARRIAGES are at the door—My lovely Mountague's superior to the rest—Every thing about him testifies the elegant taste of their owner---Even his servants have an air that speak them his---The weather being still remarkably fine, for this season of the year, a jaunt was proposed, and agreed to, of making a little excursion to visit the seat of Lord H----, about eight miles distance from B---. An enchanting place; as I am told by him, whose judgement, I am convinced, I may rely on---Two matrons, Mrs. Charlton for one, are to be of the party; her daughter, too, and three other misses; a pair of their lovers, such as they are, and another

another youth, who has not declared himself, but seems, if I mistake not, to have a kind of *pencbant* for my Ladyship; and last, tho' not least beloved, the inimitable *Mountague* compleats the set. The beaux and belles are already assembled---But Miss *Charlton* not being able, after frequent trials, to determine which will best become her complexion, a chip hat with pink ribbands, or another with blue, I left her to scribble a few lines, till she had decided the important contest---Here she comes, at last ---True blue has carried the day---Adieu.

Tuesday.

The most delightful jaunt that ever mortals engaged in; all was gaiety and love; every body in high spirits; not a moment's langour or insipidity during the whole joyous day---Oh! was it possible there should, and a *Mountague* in company!--With what just taste, in what elegant language did he point out to me, in particular, the various beauties of the place, the paintings, the architecture, nothing escaped his notice, his just criticism or applause---He has truly profited by his travels---The other youths, though men of fortune, mere cyphers,--I almost pitied their insignificancy---With gaping attention they eagerly swallowed all he uttered---While the Misses ran from place to place in raptures, at the sweet pretty jars, or the delightful *China* figures---At other times in violent titters at some of the best pictures, because of the

the oddity of their dress, as they thought them, with a thousand other remarks equally childish---For who would not be lively, you know---The phrase of mad creatures has something so charming in it, that 'tis a character universally aspired to---Gravity is so much out of fashion, that you cannot vex a modern female more than by accusing her of what, perhaps, she has not sense enough to deserve---Several involuntary smiles escaped Mr. *Mountague*, at their pretty affected levities; but he had too much complaisance to check their vivacity by the satirical remarks they gave room for---They might not, perhaps, have so easily escaped my raillery, but that my attention was engrossed by a more interesting object. Indeed, I should have been sorry to disturb the universal harmony---To want wisdom is a defect of nature---I should have shown as little by exposing their deficiency: but what I cannot endure, is to see people affecting characters they have not talents to support---From the house, which was well worth the time we bestowed in examining it, and its various curiosities, we proceeded to the spacious and delightful park that surrounds it---A most enchanting place! Extensive prospects; some of them romantic to the last degree: wood and water, nature and art, united to form an assemblage of the most beautiful objects; the eye was not satisfied with seeing, nor the ear with hearing, for I
had

had the amiable *Mountague* constantly by my side.

His voice than music sweeter,
Where'er I turn'd my eyes;
Only him I view'd, dear creature;
Ev'ry other object dies.

In this manner we rambled over the little Paradise---chatting. Oh, how agreeably! till the old Ladies, beginning to grow weary, the complaisant beaux offered their arms---Eagerly accepted, you may be sure; a favour not often within the reach of the good matrons ---Some of the Misses, envying their happiness, I suppose, began to lag behind; the scheme took; their lovers insisted on their following the example of their seniors---Who could resist the voice of Love? ---Some faint excuses over-ruled, the damsels were at last prevailed on to make a trio, and the youths marched off in triumph, dragging age on one hand, while sprightly youth led on the other. Mr. *Mountague* told me, smiling, he hoped I would not make myself singular; he would not persuade me to follow a multitude to do evil; but where the example was harmless, flattered himself I would not refuse to countenance it. Miss *Charlton*, who generally kept as near as she could to my swain, said, with what she thought a becoming air of freedom, before I had time to answer, if I had any scruple she would be my precedent,

and

and then, she should imagine, I could have no farther objections: In saying this, she took hold of his arm, a favour that was received with a smile, that had more meaning in it than she imagined. On his repeated request in a gentle insinuating voice, I no longer refused him my hand; with a most bewitching air he press'd it to his heart---I blush'd, and attempted to withdraw it, but his eyes sued for pardon for the little liberty, with such persuasive eloquence, that I must have been a savage to deny him. Encouraged by my lenity, he had the presumption, before we had walked many paces, to raise it to his lips, and imprint a kiss on it---Do you not think I was violently angry?---Oh, without doubt---I took effectual care he should not have a third opportunity of repeating his fault---I even looked a little stately, calling him an encroacher; he was all tenderness and respect, professed his penitence, and after a short dialogue, Miss being his advocate, was again received into favour, but kept at arm's length for the remainder of our walk. A little Coquetry to gain a Lover, and a little Prudery to retain him, that's my maxim. When we had seen every thing that was worthy our curiosity, we resumed our carriages, and drove to the inn, where an elegant entertainment was prepared for us---All was ease and good humour; yet the lovely *Mountague* was sometimes a little absent; a momentary sadness now and then overspread his countenance; he sighed too involuntarily, but the

the instant I spoke or looked at him the cloud vanished, and the sun-shine of his smiles beam'd forth with their usual lustre. I am not, however, perfectly reconciled to those suspicious symptoms, and must be upon my guard, lest I should exchange a whole for a divided heart. I shall write to *Emilia* the moment I have finished this---the intelligence I receive from her must direct my future conduct. One of the Misses, unwilling to conceal any of her accomplishments, began humming, after dinner, to let us know she could sing; the request was made, a violent cold, absolutely hoarse, the usual preface, many difficulties to enhance the favour, but at last obliged us, or rather herself, for I cannot say much for her performance----Her example was followed by the other Ladies---Miss *Charlton* sings very prettily, but too affected----I am not fond of singing without musick, yet I knew I should have been accused of airs had I refused--Mr. *Mountague* appeared in raptures, made me many delicate compliments on the sweetness of my voice, and looking tenderly on me, gave us a convincing proof that his own was far more worthy of encomiums, while with an easy manner, being pressed to it, he obliged us, in his turn, with half a verse of my favourite song---

With *Delia* ever could I stray,

Admire, adore her all the day.

We could prevail for no more--He complained of the shortness of his memory, and taking Miss

Charlton's

Charlton's hand with a gay air, begged she would finish it for him---Was it in nature to refuse!---The girl was in extasy at this little distinction---Cast a look of triumph at me, and performed ---à merveille----Tea and Coffee over, we return to town, where our beaux took a reluctant leave, Mr. Mountague first having obtain'd my permission to attend Miss Charlton and my Ladyship in an airing we propose making on horse-back to-morrow morning---Adieu, I am going to write to mamma, and my *Emilia*. Yours,

DELIA STANHOPE.

LETTER XII.

To HENRY MOUNTAGUE, Esq.

I Have just received the enclosed letter from your sister; instruct me what answer I am to return; nothing shall prevail on me to divulge your secrets---But surely, my dear *Mountague*, a woman so discreet, one who so tenderly loves you, merits some share of your confidence; let me prevail on you, ease your own mind as well as her's, by laying aside a reserve that does injustice to her friendship; but read her letter, and yield to the dictates of your heart; you cannot be void of affection for such a sister. Adieu, write to me, tell me you are beginning to recover your tranquillity, by the conquest of a passion so every way ill placed.

Yours sincerely,

JOHN HARVEY.

" To JOHN HARVEY, Esq.

“ WHAT is become of my brother ? You
“ are his friend. Capable of friendship, you
“ must have a soul endued with all the tender
“ feelings of humanity. Can you then refuse
“ me consolation ! You are his confidant ; I
“ seek not to make you betray it ; but will you
“ not use your influence over him, to make him
“ less reserved to a sister, who adores him ?
“ Once I flatter'd myself with some share in his
“ esteem. What have I done to forfeit that
“ happiness ? Yet he no longer loves me, or
“ he would not thus estrange himself from me ;
“ a settled melancholy has for some time cloud-
“ ed the sunshine of his youth, form'd with
“ every natural endowment, polish'd by travel,
“ and the most liberal education. What san-
“ guine hopes did not his friends entertain of
“ the shining figure he would one day make in
“ the world ? But how are our expectations
“ blasted ! Some secret grief preys upon his
“ spirits, and damps the vigour of his mind ;
“ he will engage in no settled plan of life ;
“ restless and dissatisfied in every place, in vain
“ he changes the scene ; he seems disgusted with
“ every thing around him. Is Love the cause ?
“ He knows my father's indulgence ; why does
“ he hesitate to reveal it ? I would plead for
“ him, allowing his passion to be ill placed ;
“ bid him not despair ; the most dutiful of sons
“ in every other instance, natural affection will
“ be compassionate to his involuntary error.
“ But

“ But I am deemed unworthy of his confidence.
“ Is my friendship to be rejected because I am
“ a woman? Unjust prejudice, unworthy of
“ my brother. Write to him, Mr. *Harvey*,
“ tell him my anxiety, assure him of my un-
“ limited affection, as well as the high esteem
“ my husband entertains for him! he is one of
“ the warmest of his friends; entreat him to
“ give us an opportunity of manifesting it in a
“ more convincing manner than bare profes-
“ sions; there is nothing I would not do or
“ suffer to oblige him—Excuse this liberty, Sir,
“ but I know you, and therefore need make no
“ apology—Favour me with an answer. Mr.
“ *Delavall* will be in town in a few weeks;
“ you will see him then, but I hope to hear
“ from you before that time.

“ I am, Sir,

“ Your most obedient servant,

“ CAROLINE DELAVALL.”

L E T T E R XIII.

To JOHN HARVEY, Esq.

WHY should I expose myself, by revealing my folly? No, my dear *Harvey*, let what is past be buried in eternal oblivion; open not afresh my half-closed wound, by making me recollect the perfidy, the ingratitude, of the lovely, the once beloved—Ah! what do I say, once beloved—Alas! is she then no longer so? Yes, my friend, spite of all my efforts,

my *Emilia* is still the idol of my heart. Yet I will tear it from my breast, rather than suffer a weakness so unjustifiable to get the better of my reason. Let me call her falsehood to my aid —Betray'd, sacrificed to a hated rival—And such a rival!—Capricious woman!—What infinite pains did she take to deceive my unsuspecting nature! Dissembling fondness while she fought my ruin—Who could have believed a form so perfect, such smiling sweetness, a countenance so open, so artless, so sincere; an innocence so seemingly unaffected?—But I must, I will tear her image from my breast: A more worthy object shall supply its place—How little did she merit my generous, disinterested passion! Her birth, her fortune so inferior to mine!—But what is birth and fortune when set in competition with her beauty!—Oh, *Harvey*! all the graces of her sex were summed up in her—but then a mind so degenerate—I will drive her from my memory—The charming *Delia* shall assist my cure—I do not despair; I already feel a dawn of returning peace, since I have been bless'd with her acquaintance—My sentiments for her are more tender than those of friendship. She is the only woman that has been able to make the slightest impression on me, since the fatal disappointment in my first ill-placed attachment. That, indeed, was enough to give me a disgust to the whole sex; but I am not so narrow minded as to form a judgment of all by one exceptionable character. Born with a natural esteem for them, repeated proofs alone will be able to steel my heart against their attractions.

tractions. I had once, indeed, almost come to a resolution of continuing single; but the repeated entreaty of a justly valued father, who wishes to perpetuate his name, which is extinct if I die without heirs, has, at last, determined me to the contrary. He can have no objection to Miss *Stanhope*, whose birth is equal to mine, but her want of fortune; and that, I am convinced, from a thorough knowledge of his disposition, will be no bar to our union, for he is the most disinterested of men; yet I will be cautious how I proceed in this affair: My former rashness is a warning to me. I must first endeavour to know the true character and merit of the object, and that shall determine my choice. Less liable to be imposed on now; not, as formerly, blinded by the violence of my passion, I shall be the better able to form an impartial judgment. If, upon a farther intimacy, this young Lady does not disappoint my expectations, my friends shall be satisfied, nor shall our repeated remonstrances be ineffectual. Yes, *Harvey*, you shall see me emerge from the obscurity into which unsuccessful love has plunged me, and, by exerting the talents with which nature and education have furnished me, shew myself not unworthy, I will hope, of ancestors as much distinguished by their merit as fortune. I will save you the trouble of answering my sister's affectionate letter. I shall write to her immediately. I but too well deserve her reproaches, but my future conduct—Yet let me not promise too much; my heart is still refractory. Did I tell you of my accidentally

meeting my lovely torment at church, where I was carried, by the desire of seeing once more the charming object that had so forcibly struck me, while on my journey to Lord G——'s?—At that instant *Emilia* was almost, for the first moment of my life, forgot. I gave you, I believe, a particular account of that little adventure. I mentioned it to Lord G——, expressing some curiosity to know how so much elegance and beauty came to be buried in a retirement so little suited to the genteel appearance she made. He encouraged me to satisfy it; and his seat being but a few miles distant from the village where I had seen her, and not recollecting at the same time that it was the place where my *Emilia* had formerly told me her father resided, I took a ride one *Sunday* morning, believing I should most likely see my fair incognita at church; nor was I deceived: But how severely did I suffer!—You know the rest, and my precipitant flight. The unexpected sight of her, more lovely, if possible, than ever—Her emotions!—I returned to my friends more dead than alive; her charming image haunted me perpetually—Nothing could equal my misery, for several weeks; but time, and the recollection of her perfidy, brought me, at last, to some degree of composure. In my way to town I stopt at *B*; there happened to be an Assembly on the night I arrived: I went to it, determined to attempt my cure by amusements and dissipation—I was agreeably surprized to see fair *Delia* there—I danced with her, was struck with her charms, and no less with her wit and spirit—

spirit—A character, however, that is not to me so amiable as the sweet insinuating softness of my once-loved *Emilia*—But she deceived me, and I will never more trust to such bewitching appearances—I shall continue here some time, on Miss Stanhope's account—if her beauty produces the desired effect, I shall think my journey to Lord G——'s the most fortunate of my life—but time must determine my fate—I am going to write to my father, in answer to that I enclose from him—My sister, too. Adieu.

Yours sincerely,

HENRY MOUNTAGUE.

LETTER XIV.

To HENRY MOUNTAGUE, Esq.

MUST I ever be compelled to that disagreeable task of finding fault with the conduct of my dear *Harry*? Once I had reason to boast of a son, who promised to be an ornament to his family; but now, lost to the calls of his friends and country, plunged into an unaccountable melancholy, the generous seeds of ambition, and the aspiring hopes of youthful emulation, are totally extinguished. Sunk in a supine indifference for every thing, you lose the seasons for actions that might distinguish and raise you to that fame, to the voice of which no generous spirit is insensible. How often must I remind you, that man was not born for him-

self, and his own gratifications. Your rank in life calls upon you to exert yourself. You may and ought to be serviceable to your country. Rouze yourself, my dear son, shake off the inactive lethargy that has for some time taken possession of you, and be again worthy of all my affection—I have something in view for you, but shall reserve the particulars till I see you in town. Your welfare is the constant subject of my thoughts. Strange, that I should be more solicitous for it than yourself!—Could I once see you united to a woman worthy of your choice, one of my greatest anxieties would be removed. The largeness of her fortune would be the last consideration—Yet, as your's entitles you to a considerable one, I would by no means have you think it an unnecessary ingredient when you make your choice, if that is still free, which I hope it is—You ought to let prudence, as well as love, have a share in so important an event, only rememb'reng that the last should ever have the preference. Look upon me as a friend, and expect every indulgence that your heart can wish, provided the object has merit, not only in the partial eyes of a lover, but in the more unprejudiced opinion of the world—Birth, however imaginary some people may look upon that distinction, is what I can by no means dispense with. There is generally a meanness of sentiment in those who are from the dregs of the people, which the best education is seldom able to efface—The cat in the fable is too often verified—if I am mistaken

taken in this opinion, allow for a prejudice which is too deeply rooted to be easily got the better of. Perhaps it is pride, a vice which, in general, is odious, but in some respects ought to be cherished, as both necessary and becoming. Every body has his foibles: This, perhaps, is one of mine—Adieu, my dear *Harry*, I am going for a fortnight to your sister's; by the time I return I shall expect to see you in *London*. Let me then find you, what I so much wish, worthy the esteem and affection of your father,

EDWARD MOUNTAGUE.

LETTER XV.

To Miss DORINDA BOOTHBY.

SUCH a figure on horseback—Oh, heavens! so easy, so graceful—What would I give for an answer from *Emilia*—I shall be undone before it arrives—No, a packet is just brought me—A letter from mamma, but none from my friend—Surprizing!—What can be the meaning of her silence?—Let me see, perhaps mamma's will inform me—She has left *A*—, gone upon a visit, not to her aunt; mamma will get a direction from her father, and send my letter the first opportunity. This delay may prove fatal to my peace; it will be an age before I can hear from her, and, ere then, my heart, which is already on the wing, will certainly

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have taken its flight—Mamma says, she was visibly in a declining way when she left *A*—; a settled melancholy, yet a composure and resignation that made her illness the more affecting. Her father is in great distress on her account, continually pressing her to marry, which she might at this time do, to great advantage; but she has declared a fixed resolution never to change her state—My swain at the bottom of all this, I fear—It has a good deal lowered my esteem for him; but I find it is but too true, that one may love without esteem, as well as esteem without love—Yet I will not give the reins to my passion, till I come at the bottom of this affair;—Mean-time a little flirtation; no harm in that, you know; *pour passer le temps*—Perhaps on a more intimate acquaintance I may be able to penetrate this secret in the way of friendship; a few home questions cannot be thought impertinent—Yet it looks so like jealousy, and that looks so much as if I took it for granted, that I was more than indifferent to him—Heavens! I I would not for the world—In short, time must determine my fate—O, I had almost forgot to tell you! mamma, knowing how disagreeable our habitation, bad enough in summer, must be to me when winter has robbed it of its attractions, is determined to remove to *B*—, and I am ordered to take a house here, to which she will remove as soon as it is prepared for her reception—I am not a little pleased with her resolution—Adieu, my dear, I must go try if the harpsicord is in tune; we are to have a little

little concert this evening ; my Ladyship is to perform on that instrument, Miss *Charlton* sings, so will some other Misses—The divine *Mountague* is a perfect *Giardini* on the violin—Two other beaux, Messieurs *Dalrimple* and *Crofts*, are likewise to be of the party, both adepts on the soft breathing flute—A good sort of a harmless animal, one Mr. *Fitzpatrick*, a kind of dangler, useful, you know, in a scarcity of better attendants, petitions also for admittance—He thrums upon the guittar, forsooth ; a pretty delicate instrument for a male creature ! But he makes such dismal discord even on that, that it was unanimously voted he should be admitted on no other footing, but the sober employment of beating time to the rest—He was satisfied, accustomed to be every thing the Ladies desire him, except a man of sense ; that character Nature has placed high above the reach of his genius. I said adieu an age ago, but now I positively take my leave.

Wednesday.

O ! you can't conceive any thing to equal our last night's entertainment : the fam'd *Orpheus* himself had not more command over the powers of harmony, than *Mountague*—I was in extasy ! He play'd one divine solo, in particular, that absolutely brought tears into my eyes—Such taste ! such execution !—This wicked *Harry* will be the destruction of us all—I tremble for Miss *Charlton*—Eyes so languishingly fix'd on him ; and her once pert airs, and affected vivacity, now exchanged for such a gentle, dying manner—Love, the best tutor in the world in the

art

art of pleasing, has actually taught her some degree of refined coquetry—He play'd several pieces out of *Alexander's Feast*—On my encoring one part of it, Is it not too much in the heroic strain, said he, smiling; would not a soft *Italian* air do as well? And repeated, with a gay air,

To whate'er theme my fingers move,
Still my *Cremona* answers Love:
I change the strings, rosin my bow,
Praise on your Hero to bestow;
I raise them high, and strike them round,
But Love alone they still resound.—
Adieu, ye Heroes and ye Kings,
Of Love alone my fiddle sings.

The dear creature!—Never man had such an agreeable mixture of softness and vivacity—Be silent, my dear *Emilia*! for, alas, I fear your intelligence will come too late—'Tis impossible he could have been ungenerous or inconstant: Or, if he has appeared so, some mistake, some unhappy error must have been the cause—I cannot believe one, whose sentiments are, on all occasions, so just and noble, could be guilty of acting so much against his better judgment—In short, *Dorinda*, he is the only male animal I ever met with who approached in the least degree to perfection. If I am deceived in him, I'll forswear the whole perfidious sex: but it cannot be, and I am a lost creature!

With

With him for ever I in woods could rest,
Where never human foot the ground has prest;
He from all shades the darkness could exclude,
And from a desert banish solitude.

After all this, if I am not far gone, the deuce
is in it. Adieu,

DELIA STANHOPE.

LETTER XVI.

To the SAME.

SWEET were once the joys I tasted,
All was gaiety and love.

Pity I am no Poetess, it would save an infinite number of quotations. I am violently low spirited to day, *Dorinda*, Is it to be wondered at? The most amiable of men set off this morning for *London*, on a summons from his father. His adieu was perfectly tender. I could hardly command myself on the occasion. But if I had shewn a little too much sensibility I should not have been singular. Miss *Charlton* would have kept me in countenance—He is perfectly adored at *B.* and many sighing hearts has he left behind him, whose only consolation is, the hopes he has given us of his speedy return. You cannot conceive what a void I feel—How changed every thing appears since he went. No prospect of seeing him now. How tedious

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do the hours appear ! Hardly a moment of the day did he use to be absent from Mrs. *Charlton's*, where he was always a most welcome guest ; as I am convinced they were far from thinking it improbable but he might, at last, be seduced from his allegiance, by the encouragement he met with from her daughter, added to the temptation of her superior fortune. Judging by their own narrow souls, they had no idea of a disinterested generous passion, such as he alone is capable of—But he is gone, *Dorinda*, and I am the most restless creature alive—This is Assembly-night, too—Ah ! what is now the inducement —yet to stay away---No ; it would be owning too much---I must go, then. How reluctantly ; ---Can I talk of any thing else ;---Yes ; let me strive to divert my thoughts from an object too interesting for my repose---I have taken a house ---Mamma approves of it from my description ---She will be with me in a few days---I rejoice at the prospect of being delivered from some disagreeable circumstances that attend my present situation---Miss *Charlton* and I shall be better friends at a distance---I must make myself scarce, to be properly valued.---Adieu, my dear, I can no more, my spirits have absolutely deserted me.

Yours,

DELIA STANHOPE.

L E T-

L E T T E R XVII.

To the SAME.

WE are settled in our new habitation; some addition has likewise been made to our family. The presence of my dear mamma has, in some measure, restored my tranquillity. She permits me to talk to her of the charming *Mountague*; yet she remonstrances against entertaining too sanguine hopes from an attachment, that, considering my circumstances in life, is not likely to produce any serious consequences---Matrimony she means; serious enough, that you know---I acknowledge the prudence of her advice---She is sure my want of fortune will be an unsurmountable objection to his friends---Then our suspicions in regard to *Emilia*--By the bye, my letter to her is returned to me; the Lady she went to see, a woman of fortune, and her godmother, has taken her a tour round the country, for the benefit of her declining health---There was no directing to her with any certainty; had it been sent to that Lady's house, it might have lain there for months before she could have received it, as it is not known when they will return; the contents of it, too, being of such a nature, that I should have been cautious of its falling into any hands but her own---The sum of all this is, that I must have patience. Perhaps I need not be so inquisitive; for who knows if I am not already forgot---

forgot---What a reformation! All diffidence and humility---O, this will never do---I shall lose all my airs and graces, if I continue thus in the *penserofo*---What would I give for a male creature a little more polished than the savages of the place; something that could say a few civil things to raise my spirits to *l'Allegro* again---A rap at the door---Miss *Charlton*, as I live! I see her from the windows---Her looks bespeak some important news---A new cap, or a new lover, I suppose---But I must attend her. Adieu.

Monday.

No wonder her face testified such glee---The prospect of an addition to our beaux---Oh, there's nothing gives such an agreeable flutter to one's spirits---A distant relation of her mamma's---A young man of fortune, just returned from his travels---A Baronet, too---Poor *Mountague*---in spite of all your attractions, I find there is no resisting the charms of novelty and a title--- Miss *Charlton*, once so greatly your admirer, can now neither talk or think of any body but her cousin, as she calls him, though fifty degrees removed, by her own account---I find, by some hints she dropped in the gaiety of her heart, an alliance between her and this redoubtable Sir *Charles Brudnell* has long been wished for, and projected by her mamma---A great friendship between their families---The boy's calling (for all this was in the days of yore) Miss *Charlton* his pretty little wife, was the first thing that gave rise to their hopes—

Then

Then her birth and fortune not so much inferior to his, as to exclude a possibility of success in their scheme—A letter from him to her mamma this morning, informing her he proposed himself the pleasure of paying her a visit of a week or two—To come so far on purpose to have the happiness of seeing the divine *Lucy Charlton*—O, it is a done thing, nothing less than powerful love could be his inducement—How the fair creature ran on in his praise—The sweetest fellow; so sensible, so accomplished; and then his person—there was no describing the inexpressible charms of that, you may be sure—Had she stayed much longer, I should have been down right sick of her impertinence—She came not to make me a sharer in her happiness, but to mortify me, as she hoped, by the comparison she left me to draw between our situations—I can form no idea of this so much vaunted wretch from her description; but this I am sure of, that he is not worthy to be named in the same century with a *Mountague*! For who ever equalled him?—Yet I have some glimmerings of curiosity to see the creature—It will be in public, I fancy—Not the most distant hint as if she wished to have me at her house when her swain arrives—Full as prudent to be silent on that head, I believe—What think you?—There is a certain *Je ne sais quoi* in me, that disqualifies me from making a *trio*, when a lady would secure the constancy of her lover—I don't know how it is; my misfortune, to be sure; but I am seldom pitched upon to be a friend

friend and confidant in these cases ; yet who more worthy of that trust ? There are a kind of Misses who are universal favourites with our sex—The Lord defend me from that distinction —Not very handsome, to be sure—but then the best natured, obliging creatures alive ; and exceedingly sensible ; so faithful, so attentive to the secrets one tells them—’Tis amazing the men should not pay a greater deference to their merit ; and yet they are totally neglected by them—Surprizing ! such valuable, good kind of women, too ;---Let people say what they will of the beauties of the mind, I’ll answer for it there is not a pretty woman in *England* that would barter her face for all the wisdom of a *Minerva* ---See with what ease we can hear a woman praised for her understanding ; but commend the charms of her person, and envy and detraction immediately take place--The case is clear---To create admiration, and excite love, is our universal passion---And let me ask the most Platonic Lover, if he ever, with all his refinement and sentimental taste, experienced a *tendresse* for threescore ;---No, no---we may esteem, we may reverence inferior beauties, but only the exterior will create love---That passion, however decorated by our imagination, cannot boast of much purity, when separated from friendship ; but, joined to that, is all that is delicate and noble. They ought never to be separated ; neither is perfect without the other---Friendship alone is cold and languid ; and love deserves not the name, till refined and purified by friendship

---My

---My stars ! how I run on, and to what purpose !---Wisely proving that two and two make four---Excuse me, I am not often given to those notable dissertations.

Your description of beau *Wiffle* and his Mistress was exquisitely ridiculous---Dear creature, I am infinitely obliged to you for the entertainment it gave me---I have not laughed so heartily this age ; and I am convinced that laughter is absolutely necessary for one's health : it makes the blood circulate, unscrews the features, and gives an openness to the countenance, which gravity had contracted. What throws such an air of still life over many pretty faces, but that they fear to put their features in confusion, by giving way to risibility ? ---Now I love to give my muscles full play, by flinging them all into disorder, like the soldiers charging in the *Prussian* exercise ; then, swift as lightning, at the word of command, range them in order again---There's nothing delights me more, than to set the whole company, by my example, into a broad grin, and then, instantly composing myself, leave them in the lurch, convinced they have been laughing in the wrong place ; for laughing is almost as catching as yawning ; and there's nothing more easy than to put people's features upon the full stretch, without their knowing what caused their mirth---But adieu, my dear, I shall talk you to death ; and what is still worse, I talk and yet say nothing---I will at last,

last, however, have some little mercy on your patience, lest I should rob you of that sober but necessary virtue---I dismiss you from my impertinence, therefore, with assuring you (which I hope will make some amends) that you have the honour to be very high in the esteem of your

DELIA STANHOPE.

L E T T E R XVIII.

To the SAME,

NO W Envy, universally decried and evil spoken of, though universally cherished, more or less, seems to have collected all its force, and is fled for shelter to the hospitable breast of Miss *Charlton*—I've seen her swain; and to see, or rather to be seen, with me, is only, in other words, to conquer—The poor Baronet, fond of me to distraction, lives but on my smiles—'Tis very hard that I should, though naturally of such a compassionate nature, be unwillingly the cause of so much mischief—Wicked eyes! Will nothing content you but universal empire?—What punishment shall I inflict on them!—A sober, good kind of youth, I forget his name, was so scandalized at his own mischievous attractions, that he very meritoriously defaced the beauties that had been so fatal to many female hearts

hearts—Shall I or shall I not, do likewise?—The nuns of some place, too, who cut off their noses—Peace be to their ashes—But what modern dame would condescend to follow such Antediluvian examples?—Horrid! The whole sex would be scandalized, were I to revive virtues that are now obsolete, and ages out of date—But to be serious; nothing more easy to me, you know—Yesterday, the sky was overcast, the morning lowred, and heavily in clouds brought on the day—the important day—big with the fate of *Brudnell* and of *Charlton*—Rather a sinking in Poetry—These awkward names no harmony in them—No wonder—I fancy they were never made to unite—Yesterday then, I say, mamma, attended by my Ladyship, went to pay a visit to a tolerable agreeable family: two daughters, *affez bien*, composed part of it—I was elegantly dressed—When am I otherwise, for that matter?—Issued from my chair, tript up to my drawing-room, open flew the door, proud to receive so bright a guest, and displayed a croud of beaux and belles—Miss *Charlton* and her mamma amongst the rest; and near the former, lover like, the identical Sir *Charles*, her boasted paramour—In I swam, low were my curt'seys, and easy my demeanor—The men upon the full stare, and eke the ladies—Down I sat; silence ensued; till the gentle breezes from our flutter'd fans at last set our tongues in motion, then all spoke at once—Very cold weather—An excellent Assembly—The sweetest negligée—On the part of the male creatures—No news stirring

stirring—Tolerable sport, kill'd two brace of partridges—The best dogs in *England*—Sir *John's* fox-hounds to be out on *Tuesday*—Remember that, my dear, in case you chuse to partake of the diversion—Tea and coffee—Then for charming, bewitching quadrille—I happened to cut out, so did Sir *Charles*—He drew a chair near mine—We entered into an agreeable *tête à tête*—The man is absolutely amazingly clever—Clever—I don't like that epithet—He deserves a higher encomium: He is extremely gay and sensible, as far as I could judge from an hour's conversation. His person, too, graceful and genteel, not quite in the divine *Mountague* stile, one cannot call him so lovely; but he certainly is, upon the whole, no less worthy of being beloved—An open, manly countenance, expressive eyes, an insinuating voice and manner, fine hair, good teeth—Flatters delicately, and is immensely well bred, without being the least foppish or coxcomical—Gives an entertaining account of his travels; seems to know the world; and is, I fancy, no stranger to the foibles and perfections of our sex—I like him of all things in life—Could I gain his tender friendship; tender, I say, for friendship between different sexes must unavoidably have a tincture of that in it; what a happy creature should I be!—Such a friend and such a lover as *Mountague*—Miss *Charlton* sat on thorns to see her swain and me engaged in such lively chat. All attention on his part, and gentle smiles on mine—A tolerable adept at the game,

game, she yet made a thousand mistakes ; vex'd and out of humour, she vented her spleen by laying the blame on others, for faults of which her own inattention was the cause. I could almost have pitied her, but that I knew the mortification she suffered would, or at least might, in the end, redound to her advantage—Nothing like being refined in the furnace of humility—She will have a competent share of vanity when all is done—I play'd one pool at quadrille. My beau of the party ; won a *sans prendre voie*—If fortune goes on at this rate, I shall believe the renown'd Oculist, what's his name, has paid a visit to her Ladyship, and restored, or rather, for I think it is reported she was born blind, on her sightless eye-balls pour'd the day—How else am I to account for her (contrary to her custom) paying so just a distinction to merit—Mamma and I were the first that made our exit—My new admirer, for he could not do less than admire me, you know, led me to my chair ; a gentle sigh, and, I believe, but I won't positively assert it for fact, a gentle pressure of the hand, and then, good night—I heard this morning that he is in raptures with me ; says I am, without exception, (not in Miss Charlton's hearing, I hope,) the finest woman he ever saw!—And then so agreeably lively, such graceful ease in my manner, my sentiments just and refined ; sensible, too—The man has infinite taste and discernment—Take care, Mountague, this may chance to prove a formidable rival—A creature, who gives such convincing proofs of

his

his judgment ; I'm half in love with him already—Return, O thou phœnix of thy sex, and either compleat thy conquest, or restore the moiety of my heart I have honour'd you with, that I may bestow it on him who has a *Title* ; powerful charm almost to it—The plot begins to thicken—Two lovers, half a hundred rivals—What will be the consequence ?—Broken hearts, duels, death and destruction---My pen will never do for the pathetic, I must send for you, when the tragedy scene commences, to transmit to posterity the deadly havoc that my charms have made ; till then, I will endeavour to be my own historian---This is emerging from obscurity to some purpose, indeed ; from a short eclipse, to shine forth with redoubled splendor ---Adieu ; yours still, notwithstanding my increasing dignity.

DELIA STANHOPE.

LETTER XIX.

To the SAME.

O *La cbere ami*--A fixed thing, an everlasting amity ; tender, sentimental, and platonic--Bodies out of the question--The love of Angels--You gross creatures, who can comprehend nothing but thro' the medium of your senses, can have no idea of so pure an attachment. Poor *Charlton* ! absolutely deserted for my sake, dying with envy,

as

as I foretold---Her swain, my constant attendant---Plays, balls, parties on horseback, his invention upon the stretch to procure me amusement: an immense favourite with mamma, too; was acquainted with a nephew of my father's in *Paris*; had heard of my Ladyship before he had the happiness of seeing me; half in love, from report, I suppose---Little thought to find me so very--very accomplished, though fame did its endeavour, but could not possibly do me justice, you know. I should like to see this same cousin of mine; I have a faint remembrance of him, a good pretty fellow by all accounts; spoke highly of my charms---Enough said, dubbed a favourite at once---Alas, poor *Mountague*!---Now is your time, *Emilia*; tell me your plaintive tale, and be assured of my pity, and utmost endeavour to redress your wrongs---A short absence increases love, but a long one destroys it---Return, then, O divine *Mountague*, ere it be too late, and lead me not into the temptation of inconstancy. But now for a little gravity---Sir *Charles* is, without exception, as amiable a man as I ever met with; has an uncommon share of good sense; and both his words and actions testify a perfect esteem for me; nor has he less friendship for mamma; he enters with an obliging concern into our affairs, and has already been of great service in adjusting some business which my father left unsettled---Women are poor helpless creatures in some respects---He dispatched that in a few days, which would not have been settled in an age, if left to our management; then

with what alacrity, with what manifest pleasure does he acquit himself on those occasions! Every action speaks his disinterested, his generous nature---Mamma is in raptures with him---O *Delia*, will she sometimes say, what a man is this! Talk not to me of the specious, the exterior charms of your *Mountague*---This man has a soul---Could you make an impression here, indeed---but that is out of the question---It would be presumption to hope---Do you think so, *Dorinda*? Pray, where is the violent disparity between us? He is well born; so am I. He is sensible, handsome, has a title, and so forth; but to balance this, nay, turn the scale in my favour, if I am not much mistaken, am I not witty, and chatty, and good humour'd too?---And then for a person, who will dare to come in competition with the lovely *Delia*? O, but want of fortune---Aye, there's the rub---Commend me to the *Chinese*, *Hottentots* in some respects, with their vile polygamy---yet, in others, not so much of the savage as I once thought them---Set a due value on women. No having a wife there without paying for her. That, some men might flyly hint, is the case every where---But I mean literally---It never entered into their heads to give portions with what they are sensible is a treasure of itself. Even their confining us so strictly is but another proof how sensible they are of our worth; terrified lest they should, the temptation being so great, be robbed of jewels of such inestimable value. What a dance have I led you! No less than

a voyage to *China*. Let us return, if you please---I was telling you of mamma's wishes ---They are not mine. I esteem Sir *Charles*, but I feel nothing for him like love---Pleased with his company, all is serenity ; no flutter, no palpitation ; an agreeable kind of satisfaction, but not the least emotion ; never so happy as when he is near me ; if I am melancholy, his presence immediately restores my gaiety ; but still I experience none of those more lively sensations that *Mountague* inspires ; perfectly at ease with him ; with the other I was frequently embarrassed ; a sort of consciousness, that had certainly some tincture of love in it. I shall, however, be better able to form a judgment of the sentiments of my heart, when the charming *Harry* returns—Once together, I shall know which has the preference. It is no easy matter, you must be sensible, for a woman to know her own mind—I talk as if the creatures had absolutely submitted themselves to my choice. Nothing like prudence and forecast. Forewarn'd fore-arm'd, I write in a very elegant stile to-day---But, adieu---If I am not mistaken you will very willingly dismiss me for the present.

Yours,

DELIA STANHOP E.

LETTER XX.

To the SAME.

L AST night a visit from Mrs. and Miss *Charlton*---Mamma was not at home. The former exceeding stately and reserved; the latter, on the contrary, violently high spirited, forsooth. Wonders where I had been so long---But indeed, if I had favoured her with a visit, fears I should not have found her at home. Constant engagements---Several families of her particular acquaintance came to town---The most agreeable people---And so amazingly fond of her company---hardly a moment to herself. A variety of amusements since I saw her---Wonders I was not at the last assembly---By far the most brilliant of any this season. Danced with the very prettiest fellow in *England*. I must guess who it was---Sir *Charles*?---No truly, with a toss of the head, how could you think of that creature?---By your description---He is much obliged to you for your very high opinion of him; it must be owned your taste is a little singular---Not so very singular, archly, you was once of the same opinion---A blush of vexation---Why, the man is well enough, for that matter; I thought him passable at first, but on farther acquaintance---A common case, some people are not formed for intimacy; their foibles become too conspicuous---I looked at her with meaning--My cousin, said Mrs. *Charlton* with a stately air, is a man of sense, but has a very high notion

notion of his own rank and dignity. My daughter is offended at him for trifling with some people, who have vanity enough to imagine they have made a conquest. She thinks it is ungenerous in him to encourage hopes, when, at the same time, he secretly laughs at their folly. Amiable Miss *Charlton*, cry'd I, with a satirical smile, how compassionate---The poor deluded creature---Well, really I am exceedingly shocked. And can Sir *Charles* have so much cruelty; Why, my dear, do you not compleat your goodness? I am sure it is an office exactly suited to your taste. Why do you not undeceive them? Such presumptuous vanity ought to be humbled. I saw they were both highly chagrined at the air of levity I put on. You may be as satirical as you please, said Mrs. *Charlton*, but were I in your place, I am apt to think I should see more room for gravity than mirth. Why, really, as you say, upon second thoughts, it is a very solemn affair. Stay, let me recollect the particulars. Sir *Charles*, high and mighty by his titles, trifles with---the parties not known---Gives false hopes, then triumphs in the mischeif he has made. O, it is positively an exceeding pitiful affair---when thus properly stated. But what is to be done?---Shall I be plain with you, said Mrs. *Charlton*---O, by all means; there is nothing in nature I have so great a passion for as sincerity. Well, then, as a friend, I must tell you---(interrupting her) ---As a friend, say you? O 'tis the most convenient

venient appellation in the world ; under the mask of that, people may be so compassionate, so liberal of their advice ; but it would take me an age to enumerate all its advantages. Who can be deaf to the voice of friendship ?--- Speak on, Madam, for I am all attention--- Whatever light you may view it in, resumed Mrs. *Charlton*, (vex'd to death, as I could see,) yet I assure you it is purely from the regard I have for you, that I oblige myself to tell you some very disagreeable truths---Miss *Charlton* visibly enjoyed the mortification she thought I was going to experience---When her friendly mamma went on---The frequent visits of Sir *Charles*, at your house, have caused a great deal of discourse in *B*—. O, I am infinitely delighted at what you tell me, interrupted I, for there has lately been such a total dearth of conversation, that it was scarce possible to endure the insipidity of visiting---Proceed, for heaven's sake, my dear Mrs. *Charlton*, favour me with some of the particulars : Don't let me be the only person unqualified for the subject---I have done, cry'd Mrs. *Charlton* ; (screwing up her face, and at the same time shrugging up her shoulders,) I see there is no talking seriously to you---Excuse me, Madam, you may talk as seriously as you please ; the only difficulty will be to get me to listen seriously. but now to shew you that I am not incapable of being so, when the subject requires it, I will save you the trouble you was obligingly going to take, and which I can no longer expect, having inadvertently given some unseasonable interruptions to the friendly lecture

lecture you proposed reading to me---If I mistake not, Madam, I was going to be censured for suffering Sir *Charles*'s frequent visits. The charitable world, ever ready to put the best construction on every thing, begins to envy the little distinction that is paid to me. Sir *Charles* a man of rank and fortune. I, though well born, so much his inferior in the latter, no wonder our seeming attachment is deemed improper on both sides. I would by no means be in different about my reputation, even though my heart acquits me. Those who contemn the opinion of the world, give too great a proof that they are unworthy of its favour. I would not only be cautious of committing a fault, but likewise solicitous to avoid the appearance of it --- Yet is it not extremely hard that I must not be permitted to esteem a man of worth, whose friendship is so valuable, without the tongue of envy and detraction being let loose upon me? What have I done that is censurable? Must I alone be blind to the merit of one? --- Allow me to interrupt you, in my turn, said Mrs *Charlton*. You talk of friendship for Sir *Charles*; mere chimeras. Who will believe that either of you; he a gay young man, and you not much distinguished for gravity, would ever think of adopting such Platonic sentiments! I have no notion, for my part, of such fine-spun systems. Friendship between different sexes, at your age, is always dangerous, and what nobody, that has any share of prudence, would encourage. I must own, I am a little surprised at the conduct of your mamma in this affair;

perhaps she has hopes : but excuse me, Miss Stanhope, I am more thoroughly acquainted with Sir Charles's disposition than she can be, from so short an acquaintance. He is not, perhaps, so disinterested as you imagine : but allowing he were to be so imprudent, (I must be frank with you,) he will not be suffered to follow his own inclination in so important a point. His estate came to him greatly involved, and his chief dependance, at least till that is cleared, is on an uncle, who, I am convinced, would be very far from countenancing his indiscretion--- And what is all this to the purpose ? cried I, peevishly. It must be owned, you have displayed a great deal of eloquence to very little purpose ; I thought Sir Charles had been long since out of his leading-strings ; but if he is not yet to be trusted to his own discretion, I beseech you take him under your own wise tuition, and do not tease me about him. I would not, if it can be avoided, be guilty of rudeness to my guests ; guests, too, who would soften the disagreeable advice that is given under the appearance of friendship ; a title for which I have so high a veneration, that I check, as much as possible, the natural warmth of my temper, lest I should make an improper return to your kind professions. But, for heaven's sake, let us change this hated subject ; it tries my patience to the utmost---I felt my face in a glow, nor was Mrs. Carlton's less ruffled, though she tried to assume an air of composure. Never was there a more disagreeable visit ! What would I have given to have had mamma at home ?---We parted, however,

ever, with great politeness on both sides, nor did Mrs. *Charlton* omit some apologies for the well-meant freedom she had thought proper to take with me---But I can tell her, though I can forgive, I cannot forget ; a pretty jesuitical kind of distinction---I was most violently vexed---Mamma found me in tears---Sir *Charles* attended her home ; I endeavoured to conceal them on his appearance. I did not succeed ; he saw my uneasiness ; he intreated to know the cause ; on my repeated refusals, notwithstanding his persuasive eloquence, he applied to mamma. For heaven's sake, Madam, use your influence over Miss *Stanhope* ; I am miserable to see her thus---It is no trifle, I am convinced, that could so greatly discompose her ; then turning to me, and taking my hand, Am I deemed unworthy of your confidence ? said he, with a tender accent ; tell me, has any one dared to affront you ? Mrs. *Charlton* has been here ; she is pretty free, I am told, in her comments on my conduct. But, by heavens, if I thought she had the presumption !---O that she were a man---But speak to me, dear Miss *Stanhope*, do not keep me thus on the rack---I turned from him, for I was violently out of humour : Do not tease me with your questions, cried I ; I am not well ; I am vexed, I cannot answer you---Teaze you, Madam, cried he ; good heaven ! is it thus you return my tender solicitude ?---But I have done, and down he sat in a pet, arms folded, and eyes fixed on the fire---Mamma was angry, said I behaved in a very strange manner ; what was the matter with me ? I

would tell her, some other time, was my answer ---Up got Sir *Charles*; I will leave you, Ladies; with a look so stately too---I find I am an intruder---No- Sir, said I ; you must not go yet ; excuse me, I have not treated you with that respect [*Respect* with an emphasis] that is your due---Respect, repeated he, with some degree of scorn, but I see I have been so unfortunate as to offend, or you would never use me with such contempt---He absolutely looked pale with his emotion, and, taking his hat, was going to make his exit, but I stopped him, laying my hand on his arm---Can you forgive my petulence ? said I, smiling. I am sure you would, if you knew the provocation I have had ---Tell me then, said he, pressing my hand to his lips, tell me what it is that has thus discomposed you---It is not worth repeating, returned I ; some impertinent advice, some disagreeable reflections---I wonder how they could so much affect me ; they ought rather to excite my mirth, than my resentment---As I supposed, cried he, that meddling woman ; what an execrable fiend is envy !---I dropped some hints of what she had said---I saw he was in a violent passion, though he endeavoured to master it ; he bit his lips, and frequently changed colour. Impertinent meddling woman, was often repeated, by what authority does she presume to censure my conduct ? he traversed the floor à *grands pas*---I thought I never saw him look so handsome---But composing himself at last, he sat down by me, said a thousand obliging things, swore he esteemed my friendship as the

the greatest happiness of his life ; and, in short, talked both himself and me into perfect good humour again---Stayed with us about an hour, then took a most respectful leave---A long and very serious conversation with mamma, after he was gone ; some prudent advice in regard to my future conduct ; I must be more reserved to Sir *Charles*, begins to condemn herself for encouraging his assiduities to me, yet so noble in his sentiments, so universally esteemed for his worth and merit, and then the dependance she has on my virtue and discretion, which, notwithstanding my gaiety, she has never had the least reason to call in question : These considerations, made her, with the less scruple, indulge both herself and me, in a friendship which had not only been agreeable, but in some respect beneficial to us---But now the opinion of the world ---Terrify me not with that bugbear, cryed I ; I would act justly from a more laudable motive ; since I am convinced there is nothing criminal in my attachment to Sir *Charles*, I am determined to indulge it within the bounds of discretion, in spite of a parcel of old cats, who envy me the prerogative of youth and beauty, which alone could procure me that distinction ---Yes, *Dorinda*, I must and will esteem him, for to do otherwise, would be a proof of the highest stupidity and want of taste ; faults that none durst ever lay to the charge of

Your

DELIA STANHOPE.

L E T-

LETTER XXI.

To the SAME.

O All ye gods and goddesses, what do I see! —An universal palpitation; pen ready to drop from my enervated hand; yet though my heart seems ready to take its flight to welcome the lovely stranger, I must check its eagerness, till I have told you the cause of my emotions, lest you should not have sagacity enough to guess---Amazingly stupid! however, if you do not---But see, they have quitted their carriage, dying for my presence; the younger, faultering with eagerness, making a thousand enquiries after his divine *Delia*---Mamma, all astonishment; who can they be? Yet can she doubt a moment? Could a being so every way angelic be any other than a *Mountague*? ---But then the graceful old man, who with such majesty stalked in before the respectfully bowing youth. *Mon Dieu!* if it should be his father, what will become of me! Those sober, unimpassioned mortals are such scrutinizers, and have such old fashioned notions of prudence, gravity, and all that---I shall never be able to stand the test ---O heavens! I am summoned; it is even so, Mr. *Mountague* and his son---My stars! how I am fluttered! ---What a fool---I know I shall look silly, in spite of all my endeavours to the contrary, such a tremor upon my spirits---O hideous, what a face! pale as death, yet I must go---How provoking not to have been in
the

the room when they came--- Absolutely in a panic---The first ceremonies, parading in---I die at the thoughts---If the old *Grecian* should not like me; reports so favourable, high raised expectations so little answered---Positively, I shall never be able to go through the operation ---But what will they be thinking of my staying so long?---Dressing herself, I'll warrant---Horrid! but I shall soon undeceive them in that point---Absolutely *en desbabelle*; never look'd worse---A second examination of myself in the glass brought my features to some degree of composure; and now lie still, fluttering heart. Adieu.

Thursday.

The sweetest old man!---A widower, too! ---I am half determined to discard *Harry* in favour of his father. How delightful to have so promising a son ready made to one's hands. Then, instead of his becoming my lord and master, to exercise an unlimited rule over him ---It is positively no small temptation. Don't you think I should be an indulgent step-dame to such a docile pretty youth? And then those elderly Gentlemen make such tender submissive spouses. They are the most convenient husbands in nature for a woman of spirit. The foundations, too, of such delightful adventures. All the pretty fellows dangling after one. Such a prospect of success from the infirmities of one's helpmate. Then follow jealousy, upbraidings, vindications, quarrels, reconciliations--- Such agreeable vicissitudes of calms and hurricanes; quite in my taste: Nothing in the still life

life way---But, on the contrary, should I take the son, despair from his superior merit must damp the hopes, and deter the most forward youth from pursuing me. He will have me so wholly to himself, that I fear he will soon forget the value of the inestimable treasure that he is permitted to enjoy without competitors. Upon the whole, I think the ballance turns in favour of the *Pater* : What say you ?---But, to have done with this trifling : Do you not long to hear how I was received by our guests ?---Came off with flying colours, I assure you---The lovely *Harry* all tenderness and respect---The father polite ; very observant of my behaviour ; ey'd me with the greatest attention---I rather embarrass'd at first, scarce daring to look up ; but when I did steal a glance, observed such marks of approbation, that my confusion a little abated, and, by degrees, I assumed some share of freedom and ease in my manner, and ventured to join in a conversation, which, on their part, was very lively and agreeable. A well turn'd and delicate compliment or two from the elder, drew from me answers that seemed to please him. He addressed himself to me for the remainder of the visit, leaving mamma to entertain his son, which no one could do more pleasingly---Our conversation was spirited ; he has a vivacity in his manner that makes one forget his age ; yet accompanied with a dignity that renders it impossible not to respect him. He inspires a kind of awe, that obliges one to be cautious of what one utters before a person that is visibly so great a judge of what is pro-

per

per or improper. It will be some time, I fancy, before I shall be wholly unconstrain'd in his company. Perhaps it was no disadvantage to me ; I did what I seldom do, thought twice before I spoke once : A rule that some wise people prescribe, if one would speak to the purpose. Indeed, I cannot but say, my studied were rather better than my extempore speeches ; cautious, lest my words should fly swift, while the poor tardy meaning lagg'd behind--- You would have laugh'd to have seen your lively, chatty *Delia*, so demure. The lovely *Harry* was not so intent on what mamma was saying to him, but that he frequently honoured me with a glance, accompanied with encouraging smiles of approbation--- Just as they were going to take their leave, Sir *Charles* made his appearance, seemed a little surprized at finding such guests--- The youths eyed one another with no little attention ; and no sooner had the former made their exit, then I was eagerly asked who they were ? I told him, and at the same time bestowed deserved encomiums on both--- Sir *Charles*, though in general just to merit, did not seem to relish the subject ; he appeared uncommonly grave, and even sighed frequently, though he affected to rally me on the conquest of a Gentleman who seemed so worthy of my favour--- But who told you I made a conquest of him, said I ? Is no body to visit me, without being suspected as my lover--- You have reason to know the contrary--- Have I ? cry'd he, with warmth ; but checking himself, There may be exceptions, added he ; though, if I may judge by

by the mutual pleasure that sparkled in your eyes, I should believe this *Mountague* is not of this number---- I wish return'd I, you had any just foundation for your suspicions: A captive like him would indeed be a triumph that must agreeably flatter my vanity, but I have not the presumption---O you are amazing humble, interrupted he; and what, pray, are the violent perfections of this pretty fellow, that he is thus highly distinguished by your approbation? A distinction that others, who, I will venture to say, are not so very much his inferiors, would die to purchase---Never talk of the envy of women, cryed I, laughing; for you male creatures are as much hurt at hearing another's praise, as the veriest female of us all---Come, confess, are you not fretted to death lest you should be eclipsed by this redoubtable *Mountague*? The sole rational animal in *B*---, till he graced it with his presence---My swain was in too serious a humour to retort my rillery---I did not restrain mine, however, but teased him till I saw him beginning to lose the command of his temper---Tefty wretches the best of them; I was obliged to sooth him by a little delicate flattery; his good humour returned, and we had a sentimental dissertation on friendship and love. Warm professions of the former from him; so very warm, that I am much mistaken if there are not some grains of the latter mixed with it; yet he either does not suspect, or dares not avow it---His uncle---Perhaps, too, a share of pride restrains him; such a disparity in our rank and fortunes---Mortifying!

ing! --- Were I convinced the latter was the motive of his ambiguous behaviour, he should find a spirit equal to his own --- I will not be out-done in haughtiness --- If a *Mountague*, though not distinguished by a title, which, in reality, his merit would add a lustre to, greater by far than it could give to him : If a *Mountague*, I say, so every way accomplished, thinks me worthy of his love, what is this wretch that he should deem me undeserving of his ! --- I could wish, methinks, to find some less humiliating motive for his conduct. I would willingly continue to esteem him, as I don't know any thing that gives me more pleasure than his friendship. There is a *je ne sais quoi* in this man that affects one, I cannot describe how ; not like love, I believe ; yet he certainly possesses the art of pleasing in a most eminent degree. He does not strike at first, but insinuates insensibly into the heart. I may apply Sidney's elegant description of *Pamela* and *Philoclea* to my swains : *Mountague* commands you to love him, and that in so powerful a manner, that it is impossible not to obey --- The other only persuades, but so irresistibly, that it is not in nature to refuse -- By this account one would suppose I must be in love with them both ; and, upon my word, I am half persuaded that is the case ; for I positively scarce know to which I give the preference --- I am dying to know what the elder *Mountague* thinks of me. Mamma was greatly surprized at his visit, but attributes it to the curiosity his son had raised in him, by his description of me. She cannot believe, however,

ver, though he should not be able to make exceptions to my person and behaviour, he will ever suffer him to encourage a passion so imprudent in point of fortune; she endeavours, therefore, to guard me against a disappointment, by arguments calculated to shew the improbability of any serious consequence from his seeming attachment to me---She need not be so much alarmed, I know the world too well to rely on those flourishing appearances; interest and self are too predominant---I am interrupted---Some female visitor---Now for a little small talk.
Adieu.

DELIA STANHOPE.

LETTER XXII.

To the SAME.

SUCH congratulations---All the world have been making me professions of friendship---Such a favourite---O, you have no notion what a multitude of new perfections, have been discovered in me within these few days, that the *Mountagues* have made their appearance---The match is concluded; even the day is fixed; nay, descriptions have been given of my wedding garments---The sweetest silks, a rich sett of jewels, a new equipage, *Papier maché*; six long-tailed greys! my lover's estate, too, magnified out of all bounds; twenty thousand a-year; and then rich uncles and maiden aunts innumerable; all doating on their nephew---No doubt of his being their heir---I am highly diverted at the fruitfulness

fruitfulness of their imaginations---Even Mrs. and Miss *Charlton* have been to pay their respects to me on the occasion, though dying with envy---Mean wretches, so fawningly complaisant; I am absolutely sick of the world; mamma is very uneasy at these groundless reports, fearing the *Mountagues* should imagine we were the authors of them---She therefore takes an infinite deal of pains to undeceive people, but in vain; the train is laid, and there is no stopping its progress; yet it will, I fear, end in smoke at last---Sir *Charles* is so altered, both in his person and manner, that you would scarce know him to be the same man; pale and dejected, all his gaiety is fled; he no longer appears at public places, and even his visits to me are less frequent. My heart cannot be insensible to a melancholy of which I have reason to believe myself the cause. my temper is quite changed too---What is become of my sprightliness? You never knew any thing so grave; I have even got a habit of sighing. Very unaccountable all this. Poor Sir *Charles* has certainly infected me with his sadness; even the presence of the divine *Mountague* cannot restore my tranquillity. I am peevish, restless, and dissatisfied, yet know not to what cause to attribute this change---Fly spleen and vapours; the dear creature is below; his father too, I must attend him---How ought I to chide you, *Dorinda*, for your neglecting to send me a direction to your cousin, where you tell me you are going. I hope this will reach you before you begin your journey—

journey---Write to me immediately, and rectify
the mistake---There is no living without writ-
ting to you. Adieu, my dear friend; yours,

DELIA.

LETTER XXIII.

To JOHN HARVEY, Esq.

I Have something to communicate to you,
that gives me infinite uneasiness---Favour
me with your advice, in what manner I ought
to proceed in an affair that so nearly concerns your
friend---Mrs. *Bellamy*, a widow Lady of great
fortune in our neighbourhood, returned some
time ago from *Bristol*, where she had been for
the benefit of a young Lady's health, who is,
it seems, her god-daughter, and of whom
she is so extremely fond, that it is believed she
will make her a very considerable fortune. On
a visit I made at her house, I saw that amiable
young creature; never did I behold any thing
more lovely; features perfectly regular, a com-
plexion clear as the light, but too delicate to
betoken a state of confirmed health---An unaf-
fected modesty, an insinuating sweetness of man-
ner, mixed with a gentle kind of melancholy, that
is extremely touching; her whole form exquisitely
feminine---I conceived a tender friendship for the
charming girl, from the first moment of our ac-
quaintance, and a greater intimacy has deeply
rooted her in my esteem. I was so pleased
with her engaging conversation, that I intreated
her

her to favour me with her company, whenever Mrs. Bellamy, who perfectly doats on the gentle *Emilia*, would dispense with her absence. She obliged me with frequent visits. The more I knew of her, the more tenderly I loved her. The illness of Mrs. Bellamy's brother, obliged that Lady to take a journey to *London*. On my earnest request, her sweet young friend was entrusted to my care during her absence---I endeavoured to gain her confidence, anxious to know the cause of that settled melancholy I observed in her, and which had visibly brought her into a decline---My enquires, though urged with the greatest delicacy, seemed to give her pain. She durst not, she said, expose her weakness, lest she should forfeit my esteem. I hinted my suspicions, that her sadness was caused by some disappointment in love. She hid her blushing face on my bosom, and, bursting into tears; O, Madam! cried she, what will you think of my folly; ought I not to die with confusion, while I avow that passion?---A passion so presumptuous, too!---But I am punished; my aspiring hopes are dashed; and despair---She was proceeding, when some unseasonable visitors obliged her to leave me precipitately, in order to hide her emotions--- I had no opportunity, for the remainder of the day, to renew our conversation; she joined the company soon after, with a more dejected air than usual. I could see she had been weeping; it gave me great uneasiness to think I had been the cause of her sadness, and I determined to press her no farther on a subject that so greatly affected her, leaving it

it to her own choice, whether she would make me her confident, or not---The Ladies that were with me, who have a perfect esteem for her, were very tender in their enquiries about her health---The sweet *Emilia* answered, with unaffected composure, that the Physicians at *Bristol* had pronounced her in a deep consumption, which they believed too far gone for her to receive any great benefit from the waters; she added, with a placid smile, that she imagined there was but little probability of her recovery, since she herself began to despair of it, which is not very common in her complaint, where people have generally a great flow of spirits and hopes to the last---Next morning, while at breakfast, I received the letter, which I inclose, from my father---My sweet friend observed, that the contents gave me uncommon pleasure, and tenderly congratulated me on the good news she hoped I had received---I will conceal nothing from my dearest *Emilia*, said I; this letter has, indeed, caused me a good deal of joy. I do not know, if I ever mentioned to you, a lovely and amiable brother that I have, who is, next my husband, nearest my heart; he has, for some time, been affected with a melancholy nearly resembling your own, perhaps too from a similar cause; but the charms of a young Lady, with whom he has fortunately commenced an acquaintance, has in some measure restored his tranquillity. My father, who idolizes his accomplished son, is delighted at the change; but read his letter; *Harry* is worthy of your esteem. I hope one day to have the pleasure of introducing

ing you to him. His intended, bride too, will, I trust, prove deserving of both our friendships---I think I can rely on my brother's taste; though a general admirer of our sex, yet none knows better how to make proper distinctions—She took the letter, after expressing her gratitude for my confidence; I happened not to look that way while she was perusing it, and was consequently the less prepared for the shock I received; when hearing a deep sigh, I hastily turned round, and saw the lovely girl leaning back on a chair in a fainting fit-----I flew to her assistance, rung for help, did every thing I could think of in order to her recovery, but in vain—I was obliged to get her carried to her apartment, and sent immediately for a surgeon. Never was any creature in such terror and anxiety as I was till he came, for she shewed not the least symptoms of life for near an hour---When he had breathed a vain, however, she began gradually to recover, opended her languid eyes, but was too weak to speak to me, though she several times attempted it---I soothed her with the most endearing expressions of fondness; her amiable countenance testified a grateful return; she pressed my hand to her lips, gazed at me with inexpressible sweetnes, but continued silent---The surgeon whispered me, that he was under great apprehensions of her life---Begged she might be kept very quiet---I ordered the servants to retire, desiring the gentleman to wait below, till he saw whether it would be necessary to send for further advice---He left us, and I sat down by my fair patient,

one

one of her hands locked in mine, my heart deeply affected at her condition. She sighed frequently, and often raised her eyes to heaven. At last, turning to me----And is your brother *married?* cried she, in a faltering accent; and is it now a crime to love him?---Oh! *Mountague,* must I then tear your image from my heart?---She burst into tears---You may judge of my amazement! but I durst not, in her present situation, ask an explanation of hints that you may believe had greatly excited my curiosity---After a pause she resumed: Forgive me, Madam, my death will atone for my presumption; I own it was such, to raise my hopes so high. Yes, Madam, I can no longer conceal it; I loved your charming brother; he was the first, and shall be the last dear object of my affections. Oh! *Mountague,* added she, raising her streaming eyes, heaven is my witness how tenderly, with what unabated constancy, I love you---She was silent---Her hands clasped, unutterable woe painted on her countenance---I endeavoured to soothe her into composure, said he was not yet married; that she might still be his---Oh! no, no! interrupted she, with emphasis---'tis past, I can have no hopes were he still free, which yet is impossible, since every thing was determined on before your fatal letter arrived;---Has he not long since forgot the poor, the humble *Emilia?* Oh! *Mountague,* why did you, with such soft eloquence, ensnare my heart? Where was my reason, where my prudence, while I listened to your soothing tongue; listened, till I believed impossibility?---

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But I will not complain ; your inconstancy was excuseable , such artful insinuations, such fatal appearances against me. O Madam, I cannot die in peace, till I have cleared my conduct to him ; thank heaven, I have, at last, the means of vindicating my seeming ingratitude. Let him not hate my memory, my enemies shall no longer triumph—Alas ! Madam, a false friend and unsuccessful lover have wrought my ruin ; but he shall know my innocence ; perhaps he will deign, in spite of his bridal joys, to bestow one sigh on her whose love for him ended but with her life—Perhaps he will sometimes permit you to talk of me ; and, O Madam, tell him then, how dear, how inexpressibly dear, he was to my heart ; assure him, that I rejoiced in his felicity. May heaven, added she, with fervour, shower down its choicest blessing on him ; and may his happy bride, more worthy in every other respect, love him with as pure, as tender a passion, as his poor forsaken *Emilia*—Her tears and sighs prevented more—I hardly knew what to say in order to console her ; her spirits were quite exhausted with the violence of her emotion—On consulting with the surgeon, he advised me to send for a physician, assuring me, that she appeared to him in great danger—I did so, but the distance was so great, that he did not arrive till next morning—In spite of her remonstrances to the contrary, I sat up with her all night ; she was very feverish ; towards the morning she was quite delirious ; continually repeating the name of her dear *Mountague*, often calling him to protect her against her enemies ; she talked of a Mr. *Beville*, too, and upbraided him with treachery ;

chery ; by all which I conjecture, that he has been the cause of my brother's jealousy ; and this jealousy, though groundless, is, I find, the foundation of their difference. Had that mistake been cleared up, they might both have been happy in each other's love—But now an explanation would come too late ; for even his returning tenderness could not, I fear, restore the dying maid—The physician gives me hardly any hopes of her recovery—This morning her fever seemed a little abated ; she began to talk with more composure—Oh ! Madam, said she, drawing back the curtain, to see if we were alone—What have I done ? But I may depend on your delicacy ? Have I not exposed myself ? I have not been myself ; I knew not what I uttered—Your mind is too pure, returned I, to give you room for any apprehensions on that head ; you have no reason to blush at the avowal of a love like yours—But how are you, my *Emilia* ? May I hope to restore you to my brother, doubly endeared to him, when he shall know what you have suffered for his sake ; he is generous ; some fatal mistake must have been the cause of his seeming inconstancy ; I am convinced he still loves you—Ah ! Madam, how kindly soothed ; but it is now too late!—She sighed deeply—Perhaps not, my dear ; shall I write to him ?—No, my obliging friend, 'tis past—I would not disturb his present joys ; I know the tenderness of his heart—Yet added she after a pause, I think I shall not die in peace, if I do not endeavour to remove his prejudice—Oh ! Madam, he thinks me an ungrateful creature. Can I bear that ?

that? The man on earth whose esteem I set the highest value on—You offer to write, but rather permit me to do so; it will, I hope, in the condition I am in, be no great breach of decorum; it would be an infinite satisfaction to me, to convince him I am not so greatly unworthy of his love as he at present thinks me—Shall I, Madam? What do you advise? May I be permitted to write a few lines? I shall never see him more. It will be some consolation to bid him an eternal adieu. He once loved me, at least he made me believe so; perhaps he will pay the tribute of a few tears to my untimely fate. I am but a young creature, you know, Madam. May be, he will shew my letter to his Lady. She must be amiable, or he would not have made her his choice. Hanging over her, with looks of cordial love while she reads it, he will praise her generous sympathy, if she deigns to pity my misfortunes—The poor *Emilia*, he will say, I am sorry my charms have been so fatal to her; perhaps, too, he will add a gentle sigh—Shall I, Madam?—The sweet moving girl—I remonstrated against it, on account of her weakness, and the prejudice it might do her; but she grew the more importunate—I cannot, Madam, I am convinced I cannot recover; what if I should hasten my death a few hours sooner than it might otherwise happen, it will only be putting a more speedy end to my misery. I am prepared: I feel no terrors at its approach. Let me then employ a few of my last moments in what will be so great a consolation to me—Only a line or two—I will not trespass on his patience—

ence—Should I for a moment throw a cloud over his joy, his happy bride will soon, very soon, I doubt not, restore his tranquillity—I could no longer resist her importunity, but ordered materials for writing—With great difficulty, and not without frequent pauses, occasioned by her weakness, she at last finished the letter I inclose—I will leave it to your discretion, who, I doubt not, are acquainted with the whole affair between my brother and her, whether it will be proper to send him her epistle—I fear it will only renew his grief, if he still loves her, and can now be of no advantage to either, as it is certain there is scarce a possibility of her recovery—But act in it as friendship and prudence direct---Adieu, I have been several days in writing this long account, as I am obliged to give constant attendance on my sweet dying friend. Let me hear from you, and how you have determined. I shall send you farther particulars, and let you know the event. Mr. *Delavall*, which happens very unfortunately for me, is at this time in town; you may, if agreeable, consult with him on what is proper to be done. Once more adieu.

Your most obedient servant,

CAROLINE DELAVALL.

LETTER XXIV.

To HENRY MOUNTAGUE, Esq.

WILL the happy *Mountague* deign to read a few lines from the unfortunate *Emilia*, that *Emilia* who was so dear to him?—Yes, let me die with the pleasing belief, that a passion

passion so seemingly fervent and sincere as your's, could not be dissembled—O memory, what blissful scenes dost thou represent to me! Scenes that are now, alas, for ever fled---joys too pure ---too perfect to last---The belief of your inconstancy, in some measure enabled me to conquer my passion; but when I found what cruel arts had been put in practice to deceive you into a belief of my falsehood, I no longer condemned your conduct---But could you, O thou most amiable of men, imagine a rival so unworthy!---What must you think of my ingratitude! of my infatuation!---Was it possible you should entertain an opinion so unworthy of your *Emilia*?---Did you ever discover any levity in my conduct?---Was I so easy a conquest? Even your charms, your angel eloquence could scarce prevail on me to acknowledge a sensibility, which, believe me, only you could inspire-- Heavens, with what reluctance, what unaffected confusion, did I, on your repeated, your too persuasive entreaties, at last avow my passion---And, oh, with what extasy was that avowal received!---Yet what a return did a confession so painful to my modesty procure me?---To be forsaken---To be unjustly condemned, on the bare assertion of my enemies, without being suffered to vindicate my conduct ---O Mountague! how little did you know that heart which yet had opened to you its inmost recesses---which never practised, which was indeed above disguise--Alas, what had it left worth concealing, when you had extorted the only secret It wished to hide! Your unjustifiable suspicions;

the cruelty with which you treated me; no explanation sought for; condemned unheard; left with such scorn, too---Was this, O *Mountague*, consistent with that tenderness, that winning sensibility, that seemed so eminently to distinguish you from the rest of your sex? Those gentle graces, that first insinuated themselves into my unsuspecting heart! It was unkind in you not to hear me, at least before you left me for ever. Such ungenerous treatment ought to excite my resentment, to wake my pride---But, alas! my gentle nature is a stranger to those passions---I grieved at your cruelty, but could not cease to love you. The trial was too severe; I sunk under its weight. I am dying, *Mountague*---You will never see me more. Though your heart is now bestowed on a more worthy object, yet do not refuse me some little share of your esteem. Do me the justice to believe you never had, you never could have a rival in my affections. I would be more explicit; I could remove every shadow of doubt, but my strength fails me. Let my death speak for me. Can you desire a more convincing proof of my unhappy passion? I can scarce hold my pen, my spirits are quite exhausted. O thou most amiable of men, must I then bid you an eternal adieu? Do not be too much affected at my death. I would not, heaven knows I would not---But I faint, I can no more. Adieu for ever.

EMILIA. J.

L E T-

LETTER XXV.

To Miss DORINDA BOOTHBY.

WHAT is this world?---The school of misery!---Nothing but disappointments---Poor *Emilia*! I am inexpressibly grieved for her fate---Things have taken a strange turn, since I last wrote to you, *Dorinda*: had your directions come sooner, you would have had a more particular account than I can prevail on myself to send you at present; I have not spirits for the task---*Emilia* engrosses all my thoughts---The elder *Mountague* encouraged his son's attachment to me; my want of fortune was no objections to one whose sentiments are so truly noble, and who preferred his sons happiness to every other consideration. Mamma was rejoicing at the gay prospect of felicity that seemed to await me. My lover though ever amiable, and respectfully tender, was yet less forward, I thought, in the affair than his father: a melancholy, which he in vain struggled to get the better of, was, on many occasions, but too visible; nevertheless, he gave me a thousand proofs, that I was far from being indifferent to him. These symptoms, however, of a but half conquered former passion, were no small alloy to my happiness; made me determine, before I submitted to the irrevocable tie, if possible, to penetrate into the real sentiments of his heart---Another source of uneasiness was the behaviour of Sir *Charles*; who has, I find, made a deeper im-

pression on me than I could ever have suspected he would ; never was man so dejected ; yet he did not endeavour to dissuade me from an alliance, that was in every respect so much above my hopes —He even congratulated me on it—But had you seen the pain it gave him, seen his agitation, heard his sighs, I am sure you would not have been surprized that I was affected. It was reported some time ago, tho' without foundation, that the day was fixed for our marriage ; Sir *Charles* heard of it, and took an immediate resolution of leaving *B*—; in consequence of which, he came to bid us adieu—Never shall I forget the moving scene though it is impossible to describe it—How fervent were his prayers for my happiness ; how warm his repeated professions of friendship : yet, though his heart was expanded, and one would have believed could not, at such a time, have concealed any of its feelings, he made not the least declaration of love—But does not his every action give proofs of that passion ; is it not a noble delicacy that restrains him ; he imagines my heart in possession of another, and will not give me pain by the avowal of a fruitless passion ; this is the light in which I have, for some time, viewed his conduct—if I am too vain—But do not chide me for it at present, when my spirits are already so much depressed —Another time I give you leave to rally me, but now I am too grave for any thing of that nature—I positively scarce know my myself, such a metamorphosis—This furnace of affliction will purge away all my foibles, and I protest I shall not be half so much the thing without them—

them—But what was I saying—O, Sir *Charles*—His adieu was inexpressibly tender; he kissed my hand with an air of respect, went twenty times to the door, but as often returned, always recollecting something he had forgot to say to me before we parted; but at last, ashamed of his weakness, he mustered up resolution enough to bid us farewell, with a voice, however, that spoke his emotions—What I felt on the occasion, is impossible to be described—Something more than friendship all this, I fear—I was obliged to call the idea of the charming *Mountague* to my aid—I recollect all his perfections, and, by degrees, regained some share of composure—But what became of me next morning, when I was told, by a young Lady that came to visit me, that Sir *Charles* was dangerously ill of a fever—I was obliged to put the greatest constraint on myself, to conceal my agitation—Mamma had no occasion to disguise her real sentiments; she testified her grief without reserve, and immediately dispatched a servant to know how he was—You may believe I was impatient for the answer; the accounts he brought were very unfavourable—He was indeed extremely ill! yet obstinately determined on his journey. His Physician opposed his resolution with all the arguments in his power, declaring, he would not answer for the consequence, if he persevered in so rash a resolution; but there was no making him hear reason, and in spite of all their remonstrances, he set off last *Monday* morning in his post-chaise, to which he was obliged to be supported by his servants.

What the event will be, heaven knows ! But I am under dreadful apprehensions for his life. Can you, after this, wonder at my sadness ; yet this is not all. Mr. *Mouutague* was here last night, and parted from me with all the tenderness of a Lover—But judge of my emotions, when I received the following letter from him two hours after he left me—

LETTER

To Miss STANHOPE.

“ WHAT shall I say to you, Madam !—I am the most miserable of mankind !—O, heavens ! What words can express my grief !—The inclosed letter will explain the cause—Alas ! what have I done ! my *Emilia*, my love—*Emilia*, is no more !—Forgive me Madam, I must leave you ; my horses are ready—What apology shall I make for my conduct ?—Can you pardon me—I know not what I write—My father !—Do not, I beseech you, add to his displeasure—But my time is too precious —Heavens ! Shall I then never see her more ; that angelic, constant maid ! Pity me, Madam ; and, if it be possible, forgive the miserable, the undone

MOUNTAGUE.”

This fatal letter, the destroyer of all my flattering hopes, together with the inclosed from *Emilia* to him, was brought soon after I retired to my apartment, about eleven o’clock at night
—Heavens !

—Heavens ! what a night it was to me !—I had, however, so much command over myself, as not to shew them to mamma till next day ; and then not till I had endeavoured to prepare her for the shock I knew it would give her ; fearing to increase an indisposition, of which she has for some time, complained—O, *Dorinda* ! if I should be deprived of her, too, what will become of me ?—She bore the disappointment with her usual resignation ; but I could see, nevertheless, it made a deep impression. Her illness has visibly gained ground since I communicated the fatal news—Mr. *Mountague* paid us an early visit this morning : Nothing could be more noble than this behaviour : He condemned, with great warmth, the conduct of his son, with whom, I see, he is greatly incensed—Why did he not deal generously and openly with me, said he, who have rather assumed the character of a friend, than a parent ?—I pleaded in his favour ; endeavoured to vindicate him—He praised my goodness, of which his son had proved himself so unworthy ; but said his conduct was absolutely inexcusable—Dropt some unfavourable suspicions in regard to *Emilia*—Some artful creature, he supposed—Die for love, indeed !—Ridiculous !—But her stratagem would not pass upon him, however she might deceive her foolish, infatuated lover—He was going to his daughter's, and would trace the affair to the bottom—But were she an angel, never would he consent to an alliance with such a low-born creature ; one, too, whose fatal charms had dashed his aspiring hopes, in regard to a son, who, till she insnared his inexperienced heart,

heart, promised to be an ornament to his family—He said a thousand obliging things to me ; hoped I would not deprive him of my esteem, for the faults of his son, which he neither could foresee nor prevent—To mamma his apologies were extremely respectful—I am convinced he felt the disappointment as severely as ourselves—I had determined, at first, to be a little stately, but my resentment would have been unjust ; for I could not condemn him, nor, indeed, Mr. *Mountague*, for what had happened—'Tis true, it must be owned, no small mortification to have an affair of this nature break off, when it was so near a conclusion—Such a triumph to my enemies !—I shall be insulted with their pity and condolance : but my spirits, though depressed at present, have not so entirely forsaken me, but that I shall be able to shew, I am not so deeply humbled as their malice could wish—Alas, *Dorinda* ! Do I not triumph without a victory ?—My tears flow in spite of myself—Where is my haughtiness, where my fortitude !—Am I indeed forsaken ! Have I so long been made the dupe of a feign'd passion !—How can I bear that mortifying reflection !—O my friend, my amiable Sir *Charles* ! where are you now ? Why are you not here ?—Your gentle, sympathizing heart—To whom shall I fly for consolation, now you have left me ? He was, indeed, a man worthy of my tenderness ; noble, generous, and sincere—Adieu ; I am surprized how I could write so much, considering the situation of my mind—Believe me yours,

DELIA STANHOPE.
L E T-

L E T T E R XXVI.

To JOHN HARVEY, Esq.

O Mr. Harvey, what have we done? My unhappy brother—I shall lose him, too. His grief, his inexpressible grief!—I tremble for his life—He set off for my house the moment he received your letter—Travelled all night. I was with my friend when he arrived. Her increasing danger prevented my going to bed. You may guess my surprize when I was told he was waiting for me in the parlour—I flew to receive him—but heaven, what an object presented itself to my view! I hardly knew him. No longer the lovely blooming Harry; but pale as death. His disordered hair hanging over his face—A face expressive of the deepest woe. So fatigued and harrassed, too, that he had scarce strength to rise when I ran to embrace him. And is she then dead? cried he, in a voice that spoke his anguish—O Emilia, my lovely, my constant, injured Emilia—He flung himself into a chair in agonies not to be described. In the condition he was in, I could not refuse him the consolation of letting him know she was still alive---Yet I believe I had better have suffered him to continue in an error that would have prevented any groundless hopes, for I fear, alas! it is impossible she should recover---Never was there anything so wild, so extravagant, as his joy at this information. She will still be mine, cried he, raising his voice with transports; yes, heaven will restore her to my prayers. He pressed me with

with the most earnest eloquence to permit him to see her---His presence might do wonders---Did she not believe him false?---Could I have the cruelty to refuse him an opportunity of undeceiving her?---I urged the danger of so affecting an interview to one in her condition---What condition? cried he with impatience; by heavens she shall not, must not die---My love, my tender, unabated love, will recall her to life. He was going towards the door, but I stopped him, and with an air of resolution declared he must not see her---What did he mean by such extravagant rashness? Would he be her murderer?--Her murderer! exclaimed he. -O heavens!--But I see too plainly you have deceived me---Yes, she is no more---I am now convinced I've lost her for ever. Again he cast himself into a chair, and was silent; a silence, however, more affecting than the most studied language. I took that opportunity to talk calmly to him, endeavouring to soothe him, but not with delusive hopes of her recovery, that, I ventured to assure him, was impossible. He gave me a more patient hearing than I expected; mournful sighs were all the answers he made. I then expressed my fear for his health, talked of the fatigue of his journey, and proposed his going to rest, promising to prepare my friend to see him in the morning---and ere then, cried he with impatience, she will, perhaps, be past the power---But let me not think of that, added he, or I shall go distracted---You talk of rest---Oh *Caroline*, what opinion must you have of me, if you believe I shall ever rest again---I renewed my entreaties that he would

would retire to an apartment I had ordered to be prepared for him, hinting, that it gave me pain to be so long absent from my amiable patient---This was sufficient, he insisted on my immediate return to her ; no matter in what manner he disposed of himself---Yet he had thought of something in which I could oblige him---If you will permit me, my dear sister, to be in an apartment joining to her's, it will be some little consolation to be so near, though I must not be permitted to see her. I consented to his request, and ordered him to be conducted to a room, which is only divided from her's by a thin partition, so that he might almost hear all that passed in the other. After taking my leave, and entreating him to compose himself, if possible, I returned to *Emilia*, whom I found in the same condition I left her ; extremely weak, and visibly drawing near her end---She kindly chid me for endangering my health on her account. What was her life to one so valuable as mine ?--She was distressed with a sense of obligations, to which she had it not in her power to make the least return. I entreated her to be silent on that head, her amiable gratitude was an ample recompence for any little trouble she had given me. I then asked her if she did not wonder her father was not yet arrived ?---No, Madam, he could not, I think, have had time to be here since you wrote to him. But would it not, I asked, cause you too much emotion were you to see him ?---Why, is he come, Madam ? cried she, eagerly---No, my dear ; But do you think you could bear the interview, without being too much affected ?---Indeed

deed I could, returned she ; I love him tenderly, it is true ; but I have, by the assistance of heaven, brought my mind to such a composure, that, I think, had even your brother deigned to pay me a visit, I could now see him without agitation—But such a condescension from him, who is now, no doubt, far otherways engaged, is not to be expected. Yet it is the only remaining wish I have, in regard to any thing in this life, next to the presence of my dear father—And you think even an interview like that would not too much affect you, said I ; alas, my dear, I fear you have not a perfect knowledge of your heart—We are only talking upon suppositions, returned she, but were there a probability of such an event, I am convinced it would do me no injury ; on the contrary, I think I should be much more resigned to my fate, if I could see him once more before I die. I was going to answer, when I heard a deep sigh from the other apartment—*Emilia* started—What noise is that, Madam ? O tell me, is it possible ?—Can your dear brother be in the house ?—Vain hope—Forgive my weakness. At that instant I heard his door open——He is, my love, cried I ; arm yourself with fortitude, or I must prevent his coming——Good heavens ! exclaimed she, but be under no apprehensions ; I am prepared, indeed I am. I went to my brother, his handkerchief was at his eyes, he trembled excessively——What shall I say to her, cried he, how conceal my emotions ?—But let us go, though I expire

expire at her feet. He followed me into the room—*Emilia* drew back the curtains—O, Sir, how kind, how compassionate is this!—He could not speak—He cast himself at the side of her bed, and bathed her hand, which he held between his, with his tears—A silence of some minutes ensued ; during which they continued gazing at each other, my brother frequently raising her hand to his lips—He at last attempted to break the mournful silence, but his sobs and groans choaked his voice—The lovely *Emilia* could not support this scene : She appeared ready to faint---This rouzed him from his lethargy of grief---He started up--She's gone cried he, almost frantic; wretch that I am, what has my fatal rashness done!—She recovered, however, and, with the gentle voice of love, soothed him into some degree of composure. I was obliged to leave them soon after, it was now seven o'clock in the morning, and a servant informed me, in a whisper, that her father had just dismounted at the gate.—Here was a new scene of woe—Good heavens! I am amazed how my spirits have been able to support me under such melancholy circumstances---The good old man—There is no giving you an idea of their interview ; even *Mountague's* was hardly more moving. What affects me as much as any thing is, that my brother will not be persuaded but that there is still hopes of her recovery ; he finds fault with her Physicians, and has sent express for others, who, he believes, are more skilful in their profession---Why will he deceive himself. How greatly
will

will it increase his grief when he finds himself disappointed?—Good heavens, Mr. Harvey, I see my father's carriage driving into the court—I fear he is highly incensed at my brother, I hope, however, he will spare his reproaches, at a time when he is so little able to bear them—But adieu, he is just alighted from the coach—I must attend him.

Tuesday.

I have been pleading for your unhappy friend, and a little appeased my father's wrath; at least he has promised to spare *Harry* till his foolish love fit, as he calls it, is over—He raved against poor *Emilia*, and, in spite of all I could say, will not be persuaded but that her illness is only a feint to recal her lover—How little does he know her! but I am convinced he will change his opinion, when once he has seen the lovely artless maid—He has, you know, as few prejudices as most people; but this affair happened at a most unlucky crisis; when he hoped to see his son united to a Lady, of whose merit and beauty he entertains, I find, a very high opinion—It hurts him excessively, to think of the injury it may do her, by having a marriage broke off, which was known by every body to be so near concluded---He has always hitherto supported the character of a man of honour, but his son, ungovernable and impetuous, with his ridiculous and romantic passion, has made him forfeit it in his own opinion, however others may acquit him---Mr. *Jeffey* entered the room, whilst he was condemning my brother's conduct with a great deal of vehemence---The good man offered to retire, on seeing I had company;

but

but I prevented him ; and knowing the respect my father entertains for men of his cloth, ventured to introduce them to each other---On my naming him, however, the former guessed who he was, and I could observe the civility with which he was advancing to pay his compliments to him, immediately give way to a more stately look, and reserved demeanour---Yet knowing I might depend on his politeness, and that he would not express any resentment to Mr. *Jeffey*, tho' so highly incensed at his daughter ; sensible by experience, how little influence parents have over their children in regard to love affairs---I left them together, therefore, being impatient to inform my brother of his arrival---I found him, as indeed he constantly is, with his dear *Emilia*, watching, with anxious hopes and fears, every symptom of her disorder---I whispered him to follow me, and told him who was below---You was kind to prepare me for the interview, said he ; I know he is displeased at me, and I have never yet made light of his displeasure : but my heart is, at present, so wholly lost in grief, that no new misfortune on earth can now add to it---I will go down to him ; but will not my *Caroline* (the tear started into his eye while he spoke) stay with my dying angel?---I promised him I would---He left me---This composed settled melancholy is more affecting than the first transports of his grief---You cannot conceive any thing so moving, as the behaviour of the Lovers to each other. O, could you see, with what gentle sweetness she endeavours to sooth him into composure, and reconcile him to the thoughts

thoughts of their eternal separation ; while he, holding her hand to his breast, listens with such attentive woe to her soft eloquence, tears stealing down his no longer blooming cheek, I am sure you would feel the most sympathizing pity for their distress—Mr. *Jessey* came into his daughter's apartment soon after he left us—I was impatient to know what reception your friend met with from my father—I went down with a resolution to join them, imagining my presence might be of use to him ; but, on approaching the parlour door, I heard my father's voice so much raised, that I feared he would not be able to fulfil the promise he had made me, of commanding his temper—I listened for some time, and found I was not mistaken ; my brother heard his reproaches in silence, till he said something disrespectful of his *Emilia*—Then he could no longer restrain his indignation, but vindicated her with a warmth that spoke the Lover—I thought it was time for me to interpose. I entered the room ; my brother was in violent agitation ; my father accused him of insolence and disrespect—Think of my provocations, cried your friend----Oh, had it been any other than a father, that had dared to censure such angelic purity !—But forgive me, Sir, I will retire, lest I should again forget the duty I owe you---Was this a time?—Good heaven! Is not my anguish already unsupportable? Must your unjust displeasure be added to afflict me? ---He left us---How I pitied him!—I ventured to remonstrate to my father how unkind he was, to try his temper when he was so little prepared

prepared to bear his anger---He owned himself to blame, said he would make more allowance for his grief, which he saw was more violent than he imagined it would from such a cause, next time he talked to him---I offered to recall him---But he told me, he would reflect a little, and try to argue himself into more composure, before he saw him again---I left him, and went in search of my brother ; I found him in his apartment, walking up and down in the greatest agitation---I told him, my father was sorry for what had passed between them, and now appeared inclined to forgive him---Forgive me, cried he, for what !---Let him first convince me it was a fault to love the most perfect of her sex---But leave, me, my dear sister, I am almost distracted ; there needed not this ; the measure of my woe was already full---He flung himself on his bed---I endeavoured to console him, but he made me no answer ; his sighs and groans pierced my heart---Yet finding all I could say did not abate his grief, I left him, and returned to my friend---The reverend old man was praying by her, his voice faltered through his emotions, while the big tear ran down his venerable cheek---The fair *Emilia*'s eyes were frequently raised to heaven, her hands locked in each other---A sweet serenity, overspread her pale, yet, even in death, lovely countenance---My entrance did not disturb their devotions ; I stole to the other side of the bed, and joined in the heavenly employment-----Never did I put up more fervent petitions, than for her recovery---O, Mr. *Harvey* ! I am sent for--

for---She is in a fainting fit; my brother, more dead than alive, supporting her in his arms, as my maid informs me---Now, alas! the fatal moment is at last arrived---What will become of your friend?

Tursday.

'Tis past---The most lovely of her sex is gone for ever---My tears blot the paper---Yet I will try to give you a faint description of the scene that presented itself when I entered her apartment---She was not yet recovered from her swoon. My brother, O what inexpressible woe in his countenance! held her to his breast, while his, fast falling tears bedewed her face---He turned to me with looks of despair, but could not speak. I was surprized to find my father in the room; to see him, too, with an appearance of deep concern, assiduously endeavouring her recovery---Mr. *Jessey* sat at some distance, his hankerchief at his eyes, indulging a silent sorrow. After some time, my lovely friend showed some symptoms of returning life---O, she breathes! cried my brother, in an extasy of joy; she is not dead---Speak to me, my angel---She raised her head a little, and gave him a look of inexpressible softness; her lips moved too willing to obey him; but the attempt was fruitless; she again sunk upon his breast---Now, said he, my last, my greatest trial, is begun---Agonizing thought! Can nothing be done for her?---And must I; O! must I lose her! ---No, not yet, my ever amiable *Mountague*, said she, in a faint voice, I am better, let me lie down---We placed her in a more easy posture---

posture—You may guess at the universal joy on this glimmering of hope, which yet did not promise to be lasting—We all stood round with the deepest anxiety, my brother holding her hand, which at last suddenly quitting, he desired to speak with me. I followed him to a window: there is yet time to put my resolution in practice; if I must lose her, said he with a deep sigh, let me, at least have the consolation of calling her mine—My father has long wished to see me married—Now is the time—Yes, my *Emilia* alone shall be my bride, never will I know another—Do not added he, guessing by my looks that I did not approve his design—Do not oppose me. My father joined us while he spoke; I told him your friend's proposal; he made no objections; upon which, my brother went to prepare his *Emilia* for the solemn service—I likewise spoke of it to Mr. *Jeffey*, who agreed to join their hands—Never was there so melancholy a wedding—Every body was in tears. When the ceremony was over, my brother kneeled down by the bed side, holding the hand of his expiring bride—in the sight of all seeing Heaven, I swear, said he, raising his voice with fervour, never to know a second love! He pressed her hand to his lips, then leaning his head on the bed, sighed deeply, and remained silent—I endeavoured to persuade him to leave the room, as I saw her end approach—He made me no answer, but by a look, which convinced me all solicitations on that head would be fruitless—He continued in that posture, till hearing her groan, he hastily raised his eyes, and found her in the agonies of death---What a sight for

for him! --- Yet he neither spoke, nor shed a tear --- His grief was deep and solemn --- He gazed eagerly on her face, which was turned towards him, nor did either of them remove their eyes from each other, till hers was closed in death ; at the same instant he sunk senseless on the floor --- In that condition he was carried to his apartment, where, in spite of all our remedies, it was more than an hour before he recovered ; when gazing wildly round him for some moments, he clasped his hands, and uttering a deep sigh, seemed to be relapsing into another fit --- I took his hand --- Be comforted, my dear *Harry*, said I, weeping : it is the will of Heaven --- we must submit. He cast at me a look of anguish and despair ! and starting from the bed on which we had placed him, Forgive me, Sir, (turning to my father,) I am not myself , but e'er I see you again, if that happiness is reserved for me, I hope to be more worthy of your affection --- At present --- But, adieu ! -- He raised his eyes to Heaven --- 'Tis all I can do to take from your sight the wretched object that so much afflicts --- Without waiting for a reply, he rushed out of the apartment, and, ere our amazement would permit us to follow, he had mounted his horse, and was already out of sight --- Perhaps he is fled to his friend for consolation --- Oh, Mr. *Harvey* ! need I bid you do all in your power to administer it. I have not been able to leave my room since his departure. I am still so much indisposed that I can scarce hold my pen --- Alas ! the poor *Emilia* ! I will now go down and perform the last sad office of friendship, and

and close her lifeless eyes---Adieu ! we shall not now expect your presence here---Endeavour to find out my unfortunate brother, and, if it be possible, mitigate his sorrows---Farewel, Sir ; believe me, with esteem,

Your humble servant,
CAROLINE DELAVALL.

L E T T E R XXVII.

To Mrs. DELAVALL.

Y
OU was not mistaken, Madam : your amiable brother is with me—I cannot describe my surprize and grief on receiving so unexpected a visit from my sorrowful friend---His altered looks---The deep and settled melancholy that oppressed him were to the last degree affecting---I embraced, I tenderly welcomed him ---His eyes spoke a return of friendship, but he could make no answer to what I said but by repeated moving sighs. At such a time the usual method of condolance would have been fruitless, much less could I expect him to listen to remonstrances or advice. I took a more likely way to console him---I joined in his sorrow, allowed the justice of it ; talked to him in praise of his fair departed---he burst into tears, which he, in vain, struggled to suppress ; yet had he no reason to blush at that proof of his humanity---I saw he was greatly indisposed by his fatigue, but more with the sufferings of his mind ; it was not, however, without the greatest

est difficulty I could persuade him to take some rest : Overcome by my importunities, he at last retired to his apartment. He is this morning a little more composed, though not less melancholy. I have proposed his going abroad, as the most likely method of diverting a sadness, that, since it is fruitless, ought not to be wilfully indulged. He heard me patiently ; it was equal to him where he was, all climes, all places were alike ; he had lost what alone he valued, what was dear to him, it was now no matter what became of the unfortunate *Mountague* ; dead to every joy, he would go where I pleased, but misery must be his companion, unabating misery ? he could not fly from that. I ventured gently to argue against an obstinate unavailing sorrow ; he sighed deeply---Ah, my friend, you know not what it is to have loved as I have done---And thus---O relentless fate ! He raised his despairing eyes to heaven. My *Emilia*, added he, my adored, injured *Emilia*---Again he relapsed into all the violence of his first grief---I suffered him, without remonstrances, to indulge the impetuous transports ; opposition would have been in vain ; but when his emotion sank into a more settled woe, I renewed the proposal of our journey, which I judged absolutely necessary for the recovery of his declining health. I talked of the joy it would give his father to find him again worthy of all his affections. What would be the satisfaction of all his friends to see him make use of the most probable means in order to conquer a fruitless passion, which had but too long blasted those high-raised expectations,

tions, which the earlier part of his life seemed to promise---He listened to me, without interruption ; when I ceased---I admire, said he, sighing, the amiable motive for which you give me all this advice---Take me, then, my friend, do with me what you will---I have no wish, no brightning prospect, for my future life ; all is one continued scene of misery, without one cheerful ray of hope to dispel the melancholy gloom. Death alone can close the mournful scene, and restore my long lost peace ; let us go, then, to a desart, or to the frigid zone ---My *Emilia* is lost---What then is left, but never ceasing woe ?---

I am preparing for a journey---*Mountpelier* is the place I have chosen, as most likely to restore the health of my friend ; he is, for his part, entirely passive ; yet I do not despair, but that time, and my unremitting endeavours, will, at length, restore his peace---I shall not expect the honour of a letter from you, before we set out on our tour, as it is uncertain if it would reach me---Depend on all that the warmest friendship can do, to mitigate his sorrow ; heaven will, I hope, second my endeavours---Mr. *Delavall* is, I presume, by this time, on his way to *** ; to him, I shall, from time to time, communicate the success of our expedition---Adieu, Madam, my best wishes attend you, and Mr. *Mountague*. Bid him be comforted ; time may do wonders. I am, with great esteem, MADAM,

Your most obedient,

JOHN HARVEY.

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L E T-

LETTER XXVIII.

To Miss DORINDA BOOTHBY.

ALAS, *Dorinda*, to what a melancholy situation is your friend reduced! Forsaken by one wretch, deserted by another; all my congratulations turned into insulting pity---Poor Miss *Stanhope*, cries one old virgin; really men are strangely degenerated to what they were formerly---Aye, cries another, it is no wonder; women had a different education in those days---No marvel that men are so inconstant, when girls are such flirting coquets. A third, a fourth, a fifth, mince out other wise reflections of the same sagacious nature; but I should little trouble my head what a parcel of these antiques say---The silly triumph of the younger females is what vexes me, with Miss *Charlton's* gratified malice at the head of them. She, forsooth, (greatly distinguished for her penetration, to be sure,) foresaw what would happen; was convinced, from the first, that Mr. *Mountague* only amused himself with my vanity--Sir *Charles*, too----But indeed her mamma had taken the trouble to warn the poor conceited girl---Yet there was no convincing her of her folly. The insolent creature---But I may live to be revenged---When I have a little recruited my spirits, I will once more flame out upon them in all my glory, and strike them dead with envy. O *Dorinda*, what an unmeaning flourish is here---Alas, never more chide me for
my

my seeming vanity, for I am absolutely sunk to the very center of humility---Mortifying change---What would I give to regain my own good opinion again---Say what you will, but the most conceited people are the most happy ; and I do not think their friends can do them a worse office than to cure them of that foible. *Pope* humourously describes a person on whom an experiment of this nature had been tried with success by his friends † :

Who from a patriot of distinguish'd note,
Had bled, and purg'd him to a single vote.

As warmly resenting their mistaken kindness I may truly say so of these two male wretches,

Who from a beauty of distinguish'd note

---I cannot make a rhyme to this for the life of me---No poetess, O Lord ! nor any thing else, I think, at present---Mamma is far from being well, and I am most intolerably sick---of myself and all the world. Vapoured to death ---Would you believe it, *Dorinda*, I am entered upon a course of mortification ; reading godly books as if I had not an hour to live ---What would you say if I should turn devotee at last---A peevish old virgin with store of prayers for morning, night, and noon

† I have altered the form of the quotation, because I thought one of the lines too indelicate for a Lady even to quote.

—My hands filled—My bosom with lampoons, railing at the vanities of life, because I have it no longer in my power to enjoy them ; dividing my time between scandal and devotion—Horrid ; I have actually so far entered into the spirit of this imaginary plan, that I positively thought I felt my countenance screwing itself up to a primness befitting my new character, and hastily put my hand to my forehad, expecting to find the venerable furrows that old Time had ploughed on it ; nor could I form any idea of myself, but that of an antiquated damsel with a woe-begone visage, till I lost my apprehensions by running to the glass—That dear friend, to whose judgment I have ever paid so great a deference, and who has so often consoled me under my afflictions. I examined it with the utmost attention. Tell me, said I, with an anxious look, what is your opinion of me ; Am I or am I not a beauty ? The answer was favourable to my wishes—My complexion was declared inimitable ; my eyes bright ; my nose, my lips, my hair, unexceptionable ; and the *tout ensemble* absolutely irresistible—Hem—Very humble—Yes, my dear, your remark is just—It is my misfortune ; I always was too diffident of my own perfections. O, I had almost forgot to tell you—But it is time enough ; the letter I have just received will enable me to—but I am all impatience, I must carry it to mamma ; when I have read it, you shall know the contents—not before, you are to observe. Adieu,

Friday,

Friday, Four o'Clock.

No more trifling now ; for, believe me, I am uncommonly affected ; I really think I have more feeling for the woes of others, than my own---Alas, the lovely *Emilia* is no more !---Poor Mr. *Mountague* ! I no longer feel any resentment against him---He is truly worthy of compassion-- May heaven restore his peace---By the earnest persuasion of his friend, he was with great difficulty prevailed on to go abroad, in hopes that changing the scene, would, in some measure, divert his melancholy ; that friend, the generous Mr. *Harvey*, accompanies him : they are now on their way to the South of *France*, that place being judged most likely to restore the declining health of the ever amiable *Mountague*--Adieu, I am in a too melancholy mood for writing---No news of Sir *Charles*, since he left *B.* --- O, *Dorinda* ! what a Man was that---perhaps---But I have too many real evils to lament, without having recourse to those that may be imaginary---One of my greatest is, the increasing illness of my mother ; I cannot express what I suffer on that account : but adieu once more, and believe me

Yours,

DELIA STANHOPE.

LETTER XXIX.

To the SAME.

O Dorinda, who can express my grief ! My dear mamma is in imminent danger---Good heavens, if I should lose her ! My more than mother, my kind distress, and friend---What will become of me ? To whom shall I fly for protection ? I am half distracted. This is, indeed, a trial, which all my spirits cannot support me under---But what am I doing, wasting that time in fruitless complaints to you, which I ought to bestow in endeavours to sooth her pains by my tender assiduity : O let me not lose a moment of her dear company ! Alas, how shall I ever reconcile myself to the thoughts of an eternal separation ! Pity me, *Dorinda*, for I am, indeed, truly wretched !---
Adieu.

DELIA STANHOPE.

LETTER XXX.

*To PEREGRINE DELAVALL, Esq.**Montpelier.*

I Propose, in a few days, leaving this place. 'Tis not so much a salutary climate, as company and dissipation, that are likely to be of service to my friend. We have here but few acquaintance, and, in his present disposition, he is

is but little inclined to make any. In spite of all I can say, he affects retirement; nor can all my endeavours prevent his indulging a solitary grief. I believe he would often wish to dispense even with my company, notwithstanding the regard he has for me: but depending on that regard, and motives which he must, in the main, approve, I force it upon him as often as I possibly can. I even oblige him to converse with me; or, rather, I talk, while he answers only in monosyllables---The picture of his *Emilia* I have lately discovered to be a great means of cherishing her memory, and his sorrow. On entering his apartment a little abruptly, the other morning, I found him sitting in a melancholy posture, reclining his head on his hand, the fatal miniature in the other, on which he was steadfastly gazing, the silent tear stealing down his cheek. So intently was he contemplating the image of his beloved, that my entrance did not rouze him from his pensive reverie. I retired without being perceived, determined to use some stratagem to make myself master of what so visibly fed a remediless sorrow: the task was difficult, as he always wears it next his heart. However, as I was resolved to omit nothing in my power to restore his tranquillity, I thought I should have no great reason to reproach myself, though I committed that little theft. I did not care to trust his valet on the occasion; but going to his apartment in the night, (sleep favouring my purpose,) I dexterously enough unfastned it from the ribbon to which it hung, in such a man-

ner that it might seem to have dropt off by accident, and retired, undetected, to my room, where deliberating a few moments whether to destroy it or not, I at last determined to send it to your Lady, as a present that I knew would be acceptable ; she will receive it by *Saunders*, whom I have dispatched to *England* on business---There was a most terrible uproar next morning ; diligent search was every where made for it. I never saw my friend so agitated with passion. He did not, however, in the least, suspect my having any hand in his irreparable loss, as he called it---but his poor, trembling valet---I could hardly prevent his stabbing him, notwithstanding his repeated professions of innocence---I was greatly pleased at the effect it had produced. Till this loss he seemed to drag on life, and always in a kind of stupid lethargy ; but this has awakened his natural sensibility. A settled melancholy is much more fatal, more difficult to be cured, than the most violent grief, as that very violence exhausts it ---He raved at his own negligence, and bitterly complains of the carelessness of his attendants. I affected to join with him, in order to keep alive his resentment. Better any thing should employ his attention, than that too lovely one that had so long engrossed it---At my request, he attended me in a fruitless search amongst the jewellers, to know if it had been disposed of ---The diamonds that surrounded it were of some value---He returned home, fatigued with his jaunt, and violently out of humour that we had made no discovery---I argued with him

on

on the folly of his impatient and unavailing sorrow ; condemned him more freely, than I had ever before done, on his want of fortitude : A weak wilful woman, said I, could not have shewn less philosophy : Our sex boast and ought to prove their superiority of reason---This was a proper opportunity for him to exert it ; how foward and perverse was it, to give up the many blessings, the desirable pleasures that heaven had still left him to enjoy, because disappointed in one, which, perhaps, a wise Providence deprived him of for his good---O, advice was very easily given, but---I interrupted him---And not so very difficult to practise, if he would exert himself, instead of wilfully indulging a weak and unjustifiable sorrow---Unjustifiable ! cried he, with indignation---Hear me, returned I, and I will prove it to be so---Dear as your friendship is to me, I would rather forfeit it, than countenance your indiscreet obstinacy ; I must call it so, however harsh it may sound---Do you imagine, you alone have experienced misfortunes ? They are the common lot of man : I have not, myself, been exempt from them ; but it was my study to learn how to suffer, how to make them, by reason and philosophy, fit lightly on me---A virtuous man, struggling with misfortunes, is an object on which the gods look down with pleasure ; but when they sink under them, like you, it rather excites contempt---Rouse yourself, my dear *Mountague*, shew yourself a man, and prove, by a noble conquest over a too long cherished and fruitless sorrow, that you are not unworthy

unworthy of the many valuable friends who so warmly esteem you---Friends so solicitous for your welfare---They had great expectations, from your many advantages, both of person and mind, that you would one day have made a distinguished figure in life. What is there yet to prevent your answering their wishes, but an obstinate indulgence of a remediless sorrow? The very reason why I indulge it, cried he, with a deep sigh; was there but the least shadow of hope remaining, you should not thus have reason to complain of my want of fortitude-----But now-----No, it is past remedy, indeed, as you justly say, and I am for ever wretched---That is at your own option, returned I, if you will give way to it; if you will not exert yourself, why then, indeed, there is no remedy, I allow; but let me tell you, if you have not learnt to suffer, you was born for nothing. I know you take a kind of melancholy pleasure in indulging your grief, but it is a selfish, ungenerous satisfaction---To humour your own caprice, you neglect all other ties---Your father, your friends, demand a share in your attention; you are lost to them; they lament your death---For your conduct makes it the same to them, as if you were so, even while you live---And for what is all this? For what, interrupted he, O, *Harvey!* could I have thought my friend had so unfeeling a heart!---But you never loved, or you would have better known how to make allowance for another's weakness ---He arose, and pulled out his handkerchief---I was greatly moved, but, convinced that it was

was necessary to persist; I followed, and, taking his hand, apologized for my seeming severity, which nothing but my great friendship for him could have compelled me to—He embraced, and generously thanked me for the goodness of my intention, but begged I would spare him for the future, and he would endeavour to profit by my, what he could not help calling, too harsh lecture—I yesterday proposed a removal to *Paris*; he guessed my motives were his having some acquaintance in that city, the very reason why he objected to our journey; but as I told him that business required my presence there, he gave a reluctant consent—You shall hear from me by every opportunity—My best respects to your Lady, and believe me,

Dear SIR,

Sincerely yours,

JOHN HARVEY.

LETTER XXXI.

To *Miss DORINDA BOOTHBY*.

MADAM,

MY young Lady, who takes on piteously, has ordered me to inform you, that my dear mistress departed this life last *Thursday* morning. I am sure I have reason to say it was the dismallest day I ever saw—But the Lord's will be done—Yet I will be bold to say she has not left her fellow; though, as I tells Madam

dam out of the Scriptures, she ought not to grieve, like those who have no hope ; for to be sure, she made a most Christian end, and died like a lamb : If she is not gone to heaven, the Lord be merciful to those that are to follow her. I ask pardon, Madam, for being so profuse ; but to be sure don't know when to have done praising my dear good Lady : She was the kindest mistress that ever poor servants were blessed with. There is *Harry*, and a sober lad he is, and *Sarab*, too, both crying their eyes out about her-- Though, to be sure, we have still, the Lord be praised, a very sweet tempered young Lady to serve ; but then she is more quick, as it were, and puts a body in a flurry sometimes ; for, to be sure, she is deadly smart ; and thof she is not at all proud, as one may say, yet overawes one more than my late good Lady, who was, for sarten, the mildest, gentlest mistress that ever poor servants were blessed with. I have lived in the family now nineteen years, come *Christmas*, and a deadly good place it was, when his Honour was alive ; to be sure, he lived like a Prince, that he did, and was as generous as a King ; to be sure, the poor had reason to rue the day he died, that they had ; but the Lord's will be done, it is what we must all come to, rich and poor, one and another. I remember him as well as if I had seen him but yesterday, and yet he has been dead now coming on three years ; to be sure, time slips away, as the saying is : He was a portly Gentleman, a little hasty sometimes, that he was, to be sure, but we have all our failings, as the man said. My young Lady

is

is the very moral of him. Even when she was but a babe, I used to tell my poor dear mistress that was (the Lord rest her soul !) says I, Madam, says I, *Miss Delia* is as like my master, Lord bless us, as if his honour had spit her out of his mouth ; and so she was, to be sure, and the sweetest, loveliest babe that ever was born--- People used to say she would be a wonderful beauty, and for farten she is deadly handsome, that she is---But I ask pardon, Madam, for to be sure, your Ladyship knows her better than I can pretend to do ; but, as I was saying--- O, my Lady has sent for me---To be sure it makes my heart ake to see how piteously she takes on for the loss of my poor mistress. I must go to her. Excuse haste, and the badness of the writing. To be farten, thof my parents put me to school, and honest industrious people they were, and till misfortunes overtook them, the Lord's will be done, as the saying is, very well to pass in the world---I am sent for again ; so asking your pardon for all defections, concludes your faithful servent till death,

MARTHA WAGSTAFF.

LETTER XXXII.

To the SAME.

AFTER an age of inexpressible sorrow, I again resume my pen---O Dorinda, I am now, indeed, an object of compassion ; a friendless

friendless orphan, deserted and forlorn. What a mere blank does the whole creation appear to me! O my amiable, my affectionate mother, who will supply your loss? have I a friend on earth but my *Dorinda*? She, surely is sincere, and will sympathise in my sorrows, though she cannot relieve them---Yes, my dear girl, your esteem is now my only consolation. What a world do we live in!---

With added years, since life grows nothing new,
But, like a sieve, lets all her pleasures through.

---You cannot imagine what a void I feel in my heart---It was with the greatest difficulty I could rouze myself from the lethargy, into which grief had plunged me, to examine a little into my affairs---With my ever amiable mother I lost the benefit of a very considerable annuity; and the small income that is now left ---but no matter---I feel myself in the condition our first parents must have been in when expelled Paradise. The wide world before me, where to chuse a place of rest, and Providence my guide. This last consideration is my only support---Would you believe it, I have received compliments of condolence from Mrs. *Charlton*; amazing condescension! yet I need not wonder: it must be far more acceptable to her pride to have it in her power to pity my misfortunes, than it were some time ago to congratulate them. A good many others have followed her example, and been very liberal of their insulting compassion---I have not yet determined

on

on my future plan of life---But, I believe I shall again return to my late rural habitation---Yes, let me fly from an insolent world, where riches and grandeur alone are worshipped. Let me converse with the simple villagers, whose minds are not depraved by the degenerate and infectious maxims of the great. I feel a ray of peace dart into my mind, while I contemplate the innocence and serenity of a country life. Would I had been born some cottage maid, that never knew ambition, nor its disappointed hopes; perhaps I might add to this wish, a swain amiable in person as Sir *Charles*, and with a mind, though less polished, yet fraught with all his virtues---Do you smile, *Dorinda*, and wonder at this change in my sentiments? No; you cannot, who know what variable mortals we are. The country is no longer my aversion. Experience has convinced me, that happiness is a vain pursuit; and solitude, in my present disposition, can, alone, procure me any degree of contentment---If time, that sovereign remedy of grief, should, as I suppose it will, alleviate mine, I may, perhaps, once more assume my native character, and quit my romantic rural plan for scenes more lively---But, at present, it is determined—I will fly to some retreat, such as I could wish to find. A lonely cave o'ergrown with trees mossy and old, beneath whose venerable shade I'd musing sit; no sound to break the silence but a brook, that bubbling winds amongst the weeds---Do not you think I might add a few sheep too, and the swain I mentioned, to sooth me with the gentle strains from his oaten reed
—I strive

---I strive to divert my sorrows by writing to you; I have, in some measure, succeeded; but, at this moment, the thoughts of my dear mother, which I had for a while suspended, rush upon my memory, and melt me into tears---O how tenderly I loved her, and how sincerely do I lament her loss!----lie down my pen; I must indulge my grief---Adieu.

DELIA STANHOPE.

L E T T E R XXXIII.

To the SAME.

GENEROUS, amiable Sir *Charles!* Help me, *Dorinda*, to fortify my heart against the dear insinuator---There is no resisting his various ways of charming; and yet it would be absolute madness to flatter myself with delusive hopes---His rank, his fortune, his uncle---Let me muster up every objection to damp my increasing flame; yet were it possible---But since it is not, why should I indulge myself in forming visionary scenes of bliss? I have just received the inclosed letter from him; tell me *Dorinda*, is he not the most amiable of his sex?---May I, may I not esteem him? Can there be any danger in that? He is my friend, you know---Nay, he professes no more---But it is no matter---Prudence forbids him to love me---That same prudence is a very necessary quality---Yet I am half---I will not say what---I must

must acknowledge he is an angel of a man---
Read, and judge if I am partial.

LETTER

To Miss DELIA STANHOPE.

" MADAM,

" AMONGST the number of friends that
" merit like your's must attach, permit him,
" who was once honoured with that name, and
" whose breast glows with the warmest esteem to
" join with them in sincere condolance for the
" death of your most amiable mother. O, lovely
" *Delia*, how does my heart sympathize in the
" sorrow that so fatal an event must cause you !
" But say, most amiable of your sex, is it denied
" me to offer any other proofs of my regard,
" but those empty professions--Must my sex
" debar me of the privilege that friendship al-
" lows ; that noble passion knows none of these
" sophistical distinctions, nor ought your delicacy
" to be alarmed, that I lay my fortune at
" your feet, to be disposed of at your pleasure.
" My greatest ambition will be, to supply the
" deficiency of niggard Fortune, who, blind
" in her gifts, has scattered them on the un-
" deserving, while merit like your's is neglec-
" ed--Start not at this proposal, and do not
" curse me with a mortifying refusal of what I
" should esteem the highest honour if you accept
" ---I swear by heaven, I would sacrifice my
" life to serve you ; and what, in comparison

" of

“ of that, is my fortune, I shall never flatten myself you have the least esteem for me, if you do not consider as entirely at your disposal---Did you not once permit me the honourable title of your friend? nay, more, did you not---(O, dear distinction!) permit me to believe I had your's in return? What then can you object to the instance I wish to give of the sincerity of mine?---Do you know, my lovely maid, the extent of that generous attachment?---Shall I define it to you? or, rather, for I would teach you the knowledge of it by my actions, Shall I tell you what it is not?--There would be no reason to complain of the few instances one meets with of it in the world, if it was no more than what is generally understood by that prostituted word; but it does not consist in the warmest professions, the most unreserved confidence, nor a fruitless sympathy in each others sorrows; but in actions as well as words---The generous *Romans* understood the full extent of it, when in their wills they bequeathed to their surviving friends a legacy which, in these mercenary and degenerate days, would hardly be accepted---even their children, whom they desired them to educate and provide for--And with what joy did true friendship undertake that office! O, then, if I have removed your groundless scruples, the prejudice of false pride and delicacy, let me have the exquisite happiness of raising my most valued, my amiable orphan, to a rank in which she was born to
“ shine—

“ shine---How my imagination is fired with
“ the blissful prospect in which I must indulge
“ myself, till either you permit them to be re-
“ alized, or drive me to despair by a mortify-
“ ing refusal! Will you, Madam, allow me
“ to attend you at *B*---? I dare not come with-
“ out your permission----Heaven knows the
“ purity of my intentions---Is it possible I should
“ dare to entertain any other? No; I flatter
“ myself you know me too well to think me
“ capable of being a villain---When I prove
“ so, curse me with your hate, and you
“ need not wish me greater punishment---
“ With a breast glowing with the warmest
“ esteem, I subscribe myself, till you deny
“ me that glorious title,

“ Your sincere friend, and

“ most obedient,

“ humble servant,

“ CHARLES BRUDNELL.”

Adieu, my dear *Dorinda*, I am going to answer his letter; need I tell you that it will be to refuse his generous offers---Notwithstanding the specious gloss he has given to what he calls, and perhaps believes to be, only friendship, I see the danger of indulging his romantic system ---The world, too---That would, indeed, be a noble contempt of reputation, and its favour---Such old-fashioned refinement as his, would be unsolvable enigma's to half mankind. With his sense, I am amazed how he could think of so chimerical, so visionary a scheme! ---but perhaps he has viewes not quite so disinterested

interested as he would persuade me they are. I am loath to suspect him, yet must be upon my guard, though I forfeit his boasted friendship, a friendship too, which I must own is infinitely dear to me; for is he not (O! I must repeat it, he surely is) the most amiable of men! --- Once more adieu, I am preparing for my retreat---I shall forbid his coming to *B*---, not daring to trust my heart with an interview.

Yours,

DELIA STANHOPE.

LETTER XXXIV.

To GEORGE RAMSEY, Esq;

BY my soul, *Ramsey*, I hate you heartily for your execrable advice; whether seriously, or in joke, I cannot pretend to say, but for your own sake I hope the latter. What a wretch must you believe me, if you think me capable of following it---What, betray and ruin unsuspecting innocence; and that, too, under the specious mask of friendship? if you think me so degenerate a monster, do you not blush to call me friend? How dare you admit me to your family---Surely you must tremble for the virtue of your amiable sisters. If I could prove a villain to that lovely maid whom you would tempt me to seduce, what should restrain me from violating the most sacred ties of friendship and hospitality? ---Capable of ingratitude and cruelty like that you urge me for, what

what vice would startle me? But know, I would sooner die than injure her, who is as dear to me as my soul---It is true, I doat on her to distraction; and it is equally true, I neither must or will marry her---Honour and gratitude forbid---My uncle, who has been more than a father to me, would ever oppose an action, which he would, but too justly, deem an unpardonable imprudence, in the present situation of my fortune; nay, he has long been projecting, and has, as he tells me now, an alliance in view, more suited to my rank and his ambition. A stranger to the force of genuine love till I saw my *Delia*, I gave him my promise, when he first talked to me on the subject of matrimony, that I would implicitly follow his advice in the choice I should make. To say truth, I never considered marriage in any other light but that of a necessary evil, by which a man might perpetuate his family, or clear his estate. I had seen so little felicity in it, even when entered into with the fairest prospects, so many cursing the galling chain, from which only death could release them, that I should have determined against running wilfully into the snare, had not the shattered condition in which my fortune, by the extravagance of my father, descended to me, made it my only resource; you may believe, with sentiments like these, I had no objection to submit my judgement to him, whose years and prudence, the consequence of the latter, would make a more discreet choice than my inexperience could expect, and I believed, since it was most likely I should

should repent, marry from what motive I pleased, it was best to do it in a coach and six---These were the narrow ideas which prejudice had imbibed---But love, powerful love, that noble passion that purifies our nature, has now taught me, that the sacred sympathy and union of souls are no longer imaginary chimeras, as I once treated them, and that these, so little known by the generality of mankind, constitute our highest felicity---O *George*, only those who doat like me, can conceive the transporting pleasures, of that passion. The delight of obliging one's beloved, the tender solicitude for her welfare---She is the constant subject of my thoughts; my imagination is perpetually forming schemes for her happiness, and that with so disinterested an ardour, that I could wish her to enjoy it, though at the forfeiture of my own---Till I knew my *Delia*, my every action was governed by selfish, narrow motives; but now my heart is expanded, I feel myself capable of generosity and benevolence---And is it possible that a love like this should ever suffer me to act basely?---Yet, it is certain, I cannot marry her. O why was this fatal yoke imposed upon the free-born mind, since a union of hearts, a passion free as air, unfettered by human ties, can alone give felicity---Matrimony is, too generally, the bane of love; yet, as a misjudging world has imposed it on us, and we must all submit to that tyrant *Custom*, I would sooner pierce my heart, if nothing else, can restrain its lawless passion, than injure the unsullied reputation of her I adore---Fate only knows what is de-

determined for us ; but, till happier prospects open to our view, the noble ardour of friendship shall alone influence my conduct---She has rejected, O with what angelic sweetness! the offers I made of my fortune and protection ; her delicate scruples have, if possible more than ever endeared her to me---What is there in woman so lovely as modesty and virtue ? O, why will they be so blind to their own interest as to suffer any temptation to rob them of those, their greatest charms ? Since I am denied the dear pleasure of placing her in circumstances more worthy of her merit, I must endeavour to procure that envied happiness for others---A sister of my mother's, one of the most valuable of women, who, from an unhappy disappointment in her first attachment, could never since be prevailed on to change her state, but who is determined to end her days in privacy and retirement, is the person I have pitched on as most worthy to become the guardian and benefactress of my amiable treasure---She is generous and humane, and though now what is called an old maid, has none of their peevish and unsociable foibles ; her heart is benevolent, and tenderly compassionate to the woes of others, in the redressing of which her large fortune is principally bestowed—I am convinced, when I have made her acquainted with the perfection of my beloved, she will joyfully receive her as a friend and companion, and treat her with that delicacy that will make her forget she is in any degree dependent---If I can prevail on my charming *Delia* to accept

this proposal, I shall be the most happy of my sex, in having thus made her some trifling amends for the injustice of fortune—At Mrs. Grandison's, too, I shall frequently have the pleasure of seeing, of conversing with her—O, what an enviable felicity!—This Lady indeed, lives retired in the country, a circumstance that, I fear, will but ill suit with the gaiety of my *Delia's* disposition—Yet, when, she has seen this enchanting retirement, where all the beauties of Art and Nature combine to render it delightful, I hope she will be more reconciled to it—The spring, too, is now far advanced, and drooping Nature begins to revive—The country is, you may believe, the very place where I would wish her to fix her residence; for though I dare not, must not hope she will ever be mine, yet can I bear the thought she should ever be another's?—No—That moment would be my last—Adieu, I have already given orders for my journey to my aunt's, in order to prepare her for the reception of her lovely ward. I do not fear a disappointment on her part; heaven grant my fair one may not prove more refractory

yours,

CHARLES BRUDNELL.

LETTER XXXV.

To Miss DORINDA BOOTHBY.

HEAVENS, Dorinda, I am all astonishment!—This indefatigable, this irresistible man—What would you advise me to do?

do? I am half afraid of some plot. Beauty like mine, you know—No wonder if I should be run away with—My stars, what a delightful adventure! Who would not be run away with?—Can I deliberate a moment, such a charming opportunity of manifesting my virtue? No knowing the force of it till put to the trial—Well, I do think nothing can equal such a romantic excursion—An old *Abigail*, a post-chaise and six, whisked away the lord knows whither—Enchanted castles—knights, dragoons, dwarfs; the former suing, wooing kneeling—I entreating, resisting, swooning; lastly, dagger, poison, death—if this should be my fate, remember I expect you to do, justice to my fame. I leave you my Memoirs as a legacy; publish them, my dear, and make your fortune at once; never may you have so favourable an opportunity again—if you want a key to all this, read the inclosed letters, (first that from Sir *Charles*) which were this morning brought me by an old Dowager, who is to attend me in the proposed journey.

L E T T E R

To Miss STANHOPE.

“ MADAM,

“ YOUR irresistible eloquence has convinced me, of the fallacy of my arguments, by which I endeavoured to persuade you to put yourself under my protection! or at least,

“if they were just, a prejudiced world will not,
“without injuring your reputation, suffer you
“to accept my offers. I must submit; your
“fame is dearer to me than my own; but I
“trust I have at last hit upon an expedient that
“cannot alarm your delicacy, tho’ it will in
“some measure gratify the inexpressible friend-
“ship I have for you—A sister of my late mo-
“ther’s, a valuable woman—as you will own
“when acquainted with her, sues for the hap-
“piness of your company, and earnestly begs
“you will accept of her protection; I have
“given her a faint description of your virtues
“and perfections—She has no child, and
“longs to embrace you as such—Will you my
“adorable *Delia*, consent to her wishes?—I in-
“close a letter from her—Do not humble me so
“far, as to suspect my intentions—O, let me
“not believe it possible you should think me a
“villain! if you do—By my soul, I cannot
“bear the apprehension—No, it cannot be, my
“heart has ever been open to you, and you
“know it is above artifice and disguise: trust
“me then, give me this proof of your confi-
“dence and esteem, in return for the purest,
“the most disinterested friendship, that ever
“warmed the breast of man—I am all impa-
“tience, till I know your resolution. O,
“my *Delia*! I beseech you, for your own
“sake, whose happiness alone I study, let it
“be favourable to the wishes of your devoted,

“CHARLES BRUDNELL.”

L E T.

L E T T E R

To Miss DELIA STANHOPE.

" MADAM,

" MY amiable nephew has given me so en-
" gaging a description of you, that I long
" to be admitted amongst the number of your
" friends. You have lost your valuable pro-
" tectors. I condole with you, my lovely young
" friend, permit me to call you so; allow me
" to supply their loss. It is dangerous for a
" young Lady, like you, to be without a guar-
" dian. Your utmost prudence will hardly be
" able to protect you from censure, or censu-
" ble attempts. Deign, then to accept of the
" offer I make you; my house, my arms
" are open to receive you. I do not advise
" you to be precipitate in your resolution! I shall
" not condemn, but rather commend your cau-
" tion, if you have any suspicions. My ne-
" phew is a gay young man; but, believe me,
" nothing but friendship is the motive of the
" interest he takes in your affairs. you are
" acquainted with Mrs Charlton; she knows me,
" enquire my character of her; I fear not but
" it will be satisfactory. My servant, who
" brings you this, is a person of discretion;
" she has lived many years with me; I think
" that Lady must remember her; you may if
" you please, permit her to attend you there.

H 3

" A slight

“ A slight indisposition is the only reason of my
“ not taking a journey to *B.* I hope you will
“ not indulge any unnecessary scruples—Sir
“ *Charles* is with me at the *Grove*; and, like
“ me, impatient for your arrival—When you
“ have made proper enquiries, I beg you will
“ make use of the chaise I have sent; and,
“ as soon as possible, favour us with your com-
“ pany. I shall esteem your friendship as one
“ of those valuable gifts which Fortune has
“ reserved for me, to make amends for the ma-
“ ny severe disappointments it has been the
“ will of Providence to exercise my patience
“ with. Come, then, my amiable Miss
“ *Stanhope*, and be assured you shall be a most
“ welcome guest, to

“ Your sincere well-wisher,
“ and humble servant,
“ HARRIOT GRANDISON.”

What would you do in this case, *Dorinda*? It is all very plausible. I am upon the wing for Mrs. *Charlton's*. her account shall determine my motions. I shall be infinitely indebted to Sir *Charles* if he has really procur'd me so valuable a friend as this Lady promises to be. I had just settled every thing for my retreat to *A*—, but this new plan is, you may believe, far more agreeable to me. Adieu, you shall know what I resolve upon, when my visit is over—The venerable *Abigail* is to accompany me.

Yours,

DELIA STANHOPE.
L E T-

LETTER XXXVI.

To the SAME.

ALL my doubts removed. Alas ! no such good fortune as I expected. No adventures ; no knight-errantry. You may lay aside your quill, my dear ; Fate has not intended you for an author, nor me to make a figure in history—Nothing more than a sober journey to a sober family, to meet a sober friend —O Lord, this said friendship is a mighty sober thing. Do not you think a little dash of love would greatly enliven it ?—Sir *Charles* is apropos of the falsity of that assertion, That friendship with woman is sister to love. But adieu—In spite of all this sobriety, my spirits have regained their former tone, and are quite in the *allegro*—This evening a round of farewell visits, and then a long and last adieu to *B*—and all its impertinence ; in its stead, purling rills, shady groves, and—and—I will give you a better description when I have seen them—To-morrow morning, gallop apace, ye fiery-footed steeds, and carry me to the hospitable mansion of harmony and friendship.

Yours,

DELIA STANHOPE.

LETTER XXXVII.

To the SAME.

O For a muse of fire, that I might sing great *Charles*, as he is—such a man, had you seen him, had you heard his eloquent tongue—but be thankful you did not, or you had been a lost creature—I arrived pretty late in the evening of my second day's journey, and the most agreeable journey I ever made, through a most delightful country—at the paradise of the world—Late as it was, I could discover a thousand enchanting beauties, that gave me a fore-taste of the pleasures I might expect to receive from so divine a situation—Mrs. *Grandison* and Sir *Charles* (which I found had been their custom from the time they believed me on my journey) had walked out in hopes of meeting me—I saw from the chaise, at some distance, this dear object, whose graceful form was too well known to my heart to be mistaken for any other. I called to the driver to stop! they came up to me, and O what a lively joy sparkled in his eyes!—I would have left the carriage, and accompanied them on foot to the house; but the amiable Mrs *Grandison* would not permit me; convinced, as she said, that I must already be but too much fatigued with my journey. I was obliged to submit; the chaise drove slow, and I had then an opportunity of examining the person of my new guardian—Nothing can be

be more engageing than her form, in spite of age ; her face has a gracious benignity in it that amply supplies the loss of youth and beauty—Sir *Charles* joined me time enough to hand me from the chaise ; he faltered out a joyful welcome, pressed my hand, and looked—O, Heavens ! how he looked. His eyes said more than was in the power of language—Mrs. *Grandison* embraced me, said the most obliging things, and easily banished that reserve one naturally feels on the first interview with a stranger—Sir *Charles* led me through an elegant hall, where curiosity had assembled several of the servants—into a nobly furnished spacious parlour—The candles were lighted ; the fine paintings, the variety and well chosen ornaments of that delightful apartment, but, above all, the amiable friends that so engagingly endeavoured to amuse me, could not fail to raise my spirits. I felt not the least languor or fatigue from my journey—Yet the obliging Mrs. *Grandison* ordered supper earlier than usual, that I might the sooner retire to rest—Taste and elegance, without profusion, were displayed in our entertainment—I was obliged, at the repeated intreaties of Sir *Charles*—(Who could resist intreaties so importunately, so irresistibly urged?)—to drink two glasses of *Champagne*, which greatly added to my natural vivacity—Mrs. *Grandison* seemed greatly pleased with my conversation—She examined my person, too, with attention, but not impertinently ; and when she did, it was with such visible marks of approbation, that it was impossible I should be dis-

pleased at her scrutiny—It must be owned I made no despicable figure, as I could see chance having fortunately placed me opposite to a large mirror, where I could have the happiness of contemplating my charms—But I read more flattering things than even it said of me, in the sparkling and intelligent eyes of Sir *Charles*—My riding dress became me! hair a little dishevelled, indeed, but methought the straggling ringlets, that had strayed from their confinement, gave a sort of negligent air to my countenance, that was not without its graces—So much for femality.

We did not separate till near eleven o'clock; a servant was then ordered to conduct me to my apartment; a delightful room, *India* hangings, chintz furniture; but what pleased me most was an adjoining elegant dressing room, and light closet, with a small, but I dare say well chosen collection of books—From its window, the servant informed me, is the most extensive and agreeable prospect of any room in the house—I long for morning, that I may be better informed of its beauties—I dismissed my attendant, and sat down to write to you, convinced sleep was out of the question in the present agitation of my spirits. What a change in my affairs, *Dorinda*?—How enviable a situation!—Treated with all the affection of a mother by the amiable Mrs. *Grandison*—O, I had almost forgot to tell you, I have obtained her permission to send for honest *Martha*. That good creature would have been inconsolable at parting with me, had I not given
her

her hopes, which I am now allowed to fulfil, that she should follow me to the *Grove*. I begin to yawn; good night—I think I may promise myself agreeable dreams, as my imagination is filled with the most pleasing ideas—Let me praise heaven for its mercies, and then for peaceful slumbers. Adieu.

Yours ever,

DELIA STANHOPE.

L E T T E R XXXVIII.

To the SAME.

WHAT a reformation! but six o'clock, and your once modishly, lazy friend already dressed, and preparing for a morning ramble—What a paradise presents itself to my view—from one extream to another—I feel myself growing passionately fond of the country—No wonder; a place so delightful as this could not fail to produce that effect—Yet, before I go, let me take a flight survey of my little library; perhaps I may select some sober improving friend as a companion in my excursion—Poetry, History, and Divinity. Why mention the best last?—Inadvertency—An elegant taste displayed in the choice of them—All my fear is, that I shall be too happy—But adieu, with a *Thomson's Seasons* in my hand, I am prepared to sally forth. I opened it at my favourite story—

The

The lovely young *Lavinia* once had friends—
I will finish it in yonder inviting temple, which
is executed with so much taste and elegance,
if I may judge of it from this distance. What
a serenity do I feel! my countenance testifies
my heart-felt ease, blooming and unclouded,
like this delightful morning. Adieu once more
—I should never be weary of describing my pre-
sent felicity.

Wednesday, One o'Clock.

My book was needless. Sir *Charles*, whom I unexpectedly met in the park, pointed out to me, in a more animating glowing language, if possible, the blooming beauties of Nature, than even the inimitable Poet I had brought as my companion—What a divine ramble!—Were my pen equal in any measure to the task, I would attempt a faint description of this delightful place, but I feel it is not in my power to give you a true idea of it—Mrs. *Grandison*, the heads of whose history Sir *Charles*, has favoured me with, was, in her youth, a celebrated beauty, and tenderly beloved by a Gentleman, whose merits procured him a just return to his passion; his untimely death, when every thing was settled for the marriage, threw his fair surviving mistress into a deep melancholy. She retired from the world, nor has her taste for solitude ever abated; she employs her ample fortune in acts of benevolence. Her chief delight is in rural improvements, in which she has an elegant taste. Her park and gardens are allowed to be surprizingly beautiful; no wonder, since I find Sir *Charles* had a great share in the rendering

dering them so. The hermitage and ruins in particular were of his planning—Here is the most charming variety ; wood and water, hills and valleys, rocks, cascades, temples—every thing, in short, that can improve, or diversify Nature, which is, in many places, suffered to wanton unrestrained, as in its prime—Do I tire you, *Dorinda*?—Well, then, we will, if you please, make a transition from the park into the breakfasting parlour, where I found my amiable new friend cheerful and serene, who received me with the most engaging freedom, yet true politeness. I talked, in raptures, of her little *Eden*; thanked her for the agreeable apartments she had allotted me, and was particularly grateful for my library; you know, *Dorinda*, I am, in my graver moods, immensely fond of reading. She smiled when I mentioned the library, and cast a meaning glance at Sir *Charles*; he looked as if he half dreaded my refusal of what I found was his present—I will not accept of thanks that are not my due, said Mrs. *Grandison*; if the books are well chosen, my nephew must have the praise, since they were of his collecting. I blushed a little, but thought it would look prudish to make a parade, so expressed my sense of his favour with a tolerable grace. He seemed infinitely pleased with my condescension; and, in return, kissed my hand with the most respectful air imaginable—This is a man, *Dorinda*, that, take him all in all, you shall not meet his fellow—After breakfast Mrs. *Grandison* asked me, if I had any taste for shell-work? I told her, I was particularly fond of

of it ; and, though I could not boast of my success, had made many attempts in that way—I am delighted, cried she—Come, then, and give me your opinion and assistance, in what is, at present, my principal amusement. I followed her to an apartment, which she calls her working room ; here I found her housekeeper, and several neat young women, busily employed in finishing a beautiful carpet ; others sorting shells, that were to be disposed in an elegant grotto, that was already far enough advanced to shew to what perfection it would arrive when completed by my amiable friend—Sir *Charles* had sued for leave to accompany us, but was refused—You cannot, I am sure, have any relish, said Mrs. *Grandison*, for employments that are so entirely feminine ; when our works are finished, you shall be honoured with a sight of them, and give us your approbation—But till dinner you must amuse yourself the best way you can—Was it in Nature he should be at a loss ? Such an object as his *Delia* to employ his imagination—A constant fund of happiness !—I came up to dress before dinner—Heavens ! my watch informs me I have but a quarter of an hour left for that important task—This vile scribbling !—Adieu.

DELIA STANHOPE.

L T E.

L E T T E R XXXIX.

To PEREGRINE DELAVALL, Esq.

Paris.

YOU have, I find, received my short epistle on our first arrival here, where we have now been some weeks—Our friends, some of them the most considerable families of the place, omit nothing that may be likely to divert the still too visible melancholy of your brother.

My friend has just left me: An amiable young Gentleman, second son to the Marquis *de Courtenville*, has been to pay him a visit, and welcome him to *Paris*, to which they are but just returned from their country seat. I have heard much in their praise, both from my friend and others. The old Marquis and his Lady are universally esteemed; your brother speaks warmly in favour of the Chevalier, for whom he has long entertained a friendship; but the eldest son is much less in his favour. His character is the very reverse of the rest of his amiable family; haughty and assuming, he neither is, nor strives to make himself beloved—A little adventure, in which a Lady was concerned, when Mr. *Mountague* was on his travels, created a difference between them, which threatened fatal consequences; the fair one had taste, and preferred my friend to his less worthy rival---A duel was threatened, friends interposed, the Count had a prudent regard to his own

own safety, and to outward appearance, they were amicably reconciled ; but an attempt, which was soon after made upon the life of your brother, and from which he providentially escaped, was but too justly attributed to his revengeful and ungenerous rival. No notice was taken of it, however, and Mr. *Mountague* leaving *Paris* a few days after it happened, the authors of the villainy were never detected. This affair makes him less desirous of renewing his acquaintance with that family ; not from any fears of his own safety, but from a dislike of the Count, and apprehensions lest his fiery and impetuous temper should involve him in some disagreeable adventure, dangerous perhaps to him, in whose safety he takes some interest on account of valuable parents, to whom he is indebted for a thousand proofs of friendship and politeness. The Count, too, though little worthy of the distinction, is the peculiar favourite of his father, as the amiable *Chevalier* is of the Marchioness ; yet as the invitation was given in the most pressing terms, he is determined to return the visit, in which I am to-morrow evening to accompany him— It gives me great pleasure, to assure you, his health is almost re-established, and I do not despair of seeing him once more the lively, lovely *Mountague*. He now permits, nay, takes pleasure to hear me talk to him of his dear departed ; this is what I have long wished for ; his grief will naturally become less violent, now he communicates it to others ; the concealment preyed upon his spirits, and gained force by restraint—

straint—The dissipation, too, in which we shall force him to engage, may do much towards restoring his tranquillity—He has sworn never to love again; but I doubt whether he will be able to keep his vow with a heart so susceptible as his, and women so engaging, so lively, as those of *Paris*—I dare say he will struggle to fulfil his rash engagement; but should he be once more attacked with a weakness so incident to our nature, we are in the land of indulgences, and shall find no great difficulty to get a dispensation from his vow; such numbers of subtle Casuists, too, who can easily demonstrate, how unreasonable, nay, sinful, it is, to keep it—In short, my dear friend, I am still in hopes his father's wishes will be gratified; you feelingly describe how greatly he would regret his continuing single; I do not yet, however, see any great likelihood of such an event as matrimony: but I trust much to time, and the natural inconstancy of our dispositions. I would by no means have him entertain a serious passion at present—No, I would have his heart reserved for some worthy fair one of his own country and persuasion; here I would only encourage a slight attachment by way of amusement, to prepare him by degrees for more lasting impressions—The young Lady you describe in your last, so sweetly amiable, so extremely lovely, would, indeed, be a desirable alliance for him; an alliance so ardently wished for, you tell me by his father: I will do all in my power to promote it, and shall take the first favourable opportunity to speak to him of her perfections; but

but we must be cautious ; to do it abruptly, while the idea of his *Emilia* is still so predominant, would destroy all—When he begins to shew any returning sensibility for the charms of that enchanting sex, then will be the time to draw such a picture of perfections, as may guard his heart against less worthy attachments ; when he talks of the lively, the attractive graces of the fair *Parisians*, I will oppose the amiable modesty, the insinuating sweetness of the young, the artless *Sopbia*, such as you describe her, to their too forward advances and affectation. As a contrast to their artificial and borrowed charms, I will paint the native graces, the unadorned genuine beauty of that lovely maid, and that in such glowing colours, that I doubt not, from a mind so susceptible, a heart so tender as his, insensibly to prepossess him in her favour, to make her more than indifferent to him even before he has seen her—I have, it must be owned, undertaken a difficult task, but the difficulty shall not deter me. You persuade me, I am qualified for the trust reposed in me ; I know not whether you have formed a right judgment, but of this I am certain, that I will endeavour to discharge it to the utmost of my power—The disparity of our years has been no obstacle to that warm and unreserved friendship, that has ever subsisted between your brother and me : from our first acquaintance, which commenced while he was very young, he has never had a thought which he wished to conceal ; he applied in every difficulty to my superior experience and knowledge of the world, to extricate him

him from it ; he found me ever indulgent to the involuntary errors of youth, ever ready to advise with candour, without assuming an air of superiour wisdom or importance. I say not all this, to raise myself in your opinion, but to animate your hopes as well as my own, of what we so ardently wish to accomplish—I ought rather to conceal those advantages, that you may have the less reason to reproach me if I fail in what is expected from me ; but I would leave no room for excuse, if I am negligent of a charge voluntarily undertaken from motives of friendship alone. Adieu, my worthy friend, my best respects attend your Lady, and the rest of your family. Believe me,

Sincerely yours,

JOHN HARVEY.

L E T T E R XL.

To the SAME.

Paris.

WE are just returned from the hotel *D*—, where we were received with the most amiable politeness by all the family : I might, however, except the Count, who, inspite of an affected complaisance, discovered but too visibly a half stifled envy at the superior perfections which are so conspicuous in my friend. After conversing a good while on general topics, the conversation turned on the beauty of the *English* Ladies—Are they so very handsome ?

some? cry'd the Count, directing the question to my friend. I may be partial, returned your brother, but I believe they are generally allowed to be extremely so—Handsome enough, resumed the other, colouring while he spoke; but affecting an air of pleasantry, to efface the image of your once-admired *Metea*. You are a fortunate man, Chevalier, the fair ones of your own country will not satisfy your ambition; those of ours must likewise submit to your conquest—You are greatly mistaken, said my friend, sighing; I am very far from being fortunate, nor should I esteem the conquest you hint at, any great cause of triumph—You are then more ambitious than I imagined, returned the Count, haughtily: The conquest you affect to contemn, was yet thought worthy the attempt of those, who, I have reason to think, added he, (with a contemptuous smile,) might justly boast as much taste and merit as yourself—I know not who those might be, answered Mr. *Mountague*, but do not question your assertion. The Lady had beauty, which could not fail to attract admirers, but our taste in that depends more on caprice than judgment. It was to that, perhaps, I ought to attribute the little distinction she honoured me with in preference to my rivals—You are very humble, Chevalier, said the Count, smiling, a virtue too commendable not to be cherished by your well-wishers; you did not, if I remember right, use to be much distinguished for it—Every thing in its proper place, Count; in some cases it is necessary to have a good opinion of one's self; it is one of the best spurs to noble

noble actions; if we think ourselves capable of them the work is half done—I am of your opinion, said the Marquis; those who deprecate human nature, destroy one of our greatest incentives to virtue, and leave an excuse for our vices, that we should not have had, if, on the contrary, its dignity was asserted.—We are beginning to talk like Philosophers, cried the gay Chevalier; had we not better resume the subject of our fair tormentors? My friend here assumed such an air of sober sadness, when they were mentioned, that I half suspect one of them, at least, has had less taste than beauty. Is it not so? *Mountague*; come, let me join with you in condemning the rigour of your perverse mistress, if she could be insensible to charms, to which the fairest eyes of *Paris* have done justice; surely she must be a prodigy of cruelty; but I promise to assist you in a suitable revenge; attach yourself to one who has more discernment; punish her by an inconstancy she so well deserves—My friend seemed visibly uneasy at this conversation; I endeavoured to relieve him, by observing that raillery, which was only designed to enliven conversation, should never be pursued, where it gave pain—Nor should it by me, cried the Chevalier, if I thought it had that effect; yet on the subject of love, I can hardly restrain it. I would persuade those, whose peace of mind I value, to follow my example, and never suffer that passion to affect them any farther than as an agreeable amusement—Are then the feelings of our hearts, said Mr. *Mountague*, so much in our own power, as to

to stop its progress, when once seriously affected ; I fear, my friend, you will one day experience the contrary—No, replied the Chevalier, I defy the little blind deity, and all his artillery of darts and flames ; it is our imagination that renders our wounds fatal. I keep mine under proper discipline ; I love the whole sex, but shall take care how I make a distinction that may endanger my repose ; seriously affected, indeed !—Ah, the Lord defend me from your serious sober attachments—Make the most of your freedom, said the Count, for I am persuaded, with the Chevalier, you will not always have it to boast of—Because you no longer have it, said his brother—Would you believe it *Mountague*, my brother is, like you, become one of the fighting tribe ; all his haughtiness has not been able to defend his heart against a pair of the finest languishing blue eyes, that, I must own, ever displayed their attractive beams. I do not spare him any more than I will you, Chevalier, except you act generously, and make me your confidant ; in that case you silence my raillery, and may command my best services. I will turn knight-errant for your sake. I have a natural turn for chivalry. My great grandfather was a *Spaniard*—Was he not, Madam ? turning to the Marchioness, I think you have told me so—Say but the word, *Mountague*, and I immediately mount my Rosinante, bring off your redoubtable *Dulcinea*, in spight of dragoons and draw-bridges, and, when we have once got her into *France*, the salutary warmth of our Climate, and the amiable example of our

our compassionate tender hearted fair one's, (your pardon, Madam, smiling, but, indeed, I need not ask it, since the character I give is meant as an encomium,) will soon thaw her frosty bosom into softness. What say you, Chevalier, shall I begin my pursuit?---My friend could not answer; he was visibly moved; but I, by diverting their attention, prevented its being observed. I could not, however, restrain the too lively sallies of the Chevalier---I have another scheme to propose, resumed he, a scheme that will be attended with less trouble; you shall accompany me in a visit to my brother's inexorable heroine, who knows---I bar that, interrupted the Count, I have, ere now, had reason to repent making *Mountague* a confidant; not that, to do him justice, he could prevent the consequence; it was my own indiscretion, that exposed my mistress to the danger---Of his wicked attractions, interrupted the Chevalier, laughing, but your present inamorata is of a very different character. I question if even a *Mountague* could melt her icy bosom; we must introduce him to her brother, for the honour of our country-women. I dare say he little expects to find, in our land of gaiety and freedom, a Lady so rigidly coy. Besides, he seems at present so much of her own turn, that it would be a thousand pities to keep asunder such kindred souls. Let me die if they are not exactly formed for each other. Were it not for the difference of their persuasion---But who, now-a-days, regard such trifles? If I am rightly informed, Chevalier, you *Englishmen* have pretty well shook off the yoke
of

of Priestcraft---That I should imagine every man of sense would do, said Mr. Mountague, but I should be sorry if you likewise thought we had shaken off religion; yet you mention that same Priestcraft with a meaning archness. Ah! for Heaven's sake, cried the other, smiling, let's talk no more of religion; I am no bigot, believe me: but agree with your excellent Poet,

An honest man's the noblest work of God—

As for different opinions in point of faith—No more of this, interrupted the Marchioness, gravely: It must be owned, my son, your sentiments are, on all occasions, sufficiently free—Well then, cried he, smiling, let us return to the fair *Isabella*. Hardly had he spoke, when that young Lady, accompanied by her aunt, came to pay her respects to the Marchioness. My curiosity was highly raised, by what they had said of her: You may believe I was not displeased to have so soon an opportunity to gratify it—Her first appearance greatly propoſefſed me in her favour, which encreased to the most perfect reſpe&t and admiration. I scarce ever beheld a woman more compleatly charming. The sweet, the graceful composure of her air, the elegance of her person, but, above all, the enchanting graces of her expressive countenance, made it impossible to behold it with indifference—Even her dress had something uncommonly elegant; something that at once spoke the justest taste, and greatest modeſty: She was in
mourning

mourning for her father, as I afterwards learnt, and the dark colour of her habit set off to advantage the finest complexion I ever beheld. Her fine, languishing blue eyes spoke a secret melancholy, which, indeed, was as evident in her conversation—Her manner was irresistibly soft and engaging—Judge if, in company of so fair an object, I did not pay some attention to the looks of our friend; I saw in them visible marks of surprize and admiration; nor did the lovely *Isabella*, if I rightly interpret her timid glances, seem less sensible of his merit—Your brother was uncommonly thoughtful during their visit—This drew on him again, when they were gone, the raillery of the Chevalier—The Count colour'd, and seemed displeased, when that young Gentleman ascribed what he called his *Penserosa*, plaintive lover-like air, to their late guests—The fair *Isabella*, said he, smiling, has her attractions; I warn'd you how it would be: it would be a droll sort of a remedy were you to oppose love to love, and drive out one passion by the entrance of another—Possession, however, Chevalier, is nine points of the law; in this your old flame has the advantage. But yet the fair *Isabella*—Come, confess—My brother will not be displeased to find his taste approved—Is she not a lovely creature?—Such eyes, *Mountague*, Did you ever see such eyes!—You enjoy the happiness, said my friend, (affectionately smiling,) of being *toujours gai*—And sometimes *trop gai*, cried the Count—I wish my brother would learn the art, by properly timing it, to render his vivacity agreeable—Since

you take the trouble of wishing for me, Count, said the other, I can do no less than return the compliment, and wish, in my turn, that you would likewise study to time your gravity, and consider that one is not always in a humour to be so, though you are seldom otherwise—The Marchioness, judging by the clouded countenance of her eldest son, that he was going to express some displeasure at his remark, changed the conversation, which continued on more general subjects for the rest of our visit.

When we were alone, I asked my friend's opinion of the fair *Isabella*. That question is almost needless, answered he, sighing, for surely you could not but remark the striking resemblance there is between her gentle manners, nay, even some of her lovely features, to those of my departed angel---This is enough, you may justly believe, to make me regard her, with partiality indeed, next to my ever regretted *Emilia*. She is, without dispute, the most charming woman I ever beheld---O, surely the Count is but little worthy so divine a creature. You speak with fervour, said I, and I am pleased to find that you are beginning to be sensible, that all female beauty and perfection did not expire with your acknowledged lovely fair one---Ah, my friend, cried he, she was indeed most lovely, and most beloved, and never shall my heart rove from its first attachment, or be ever in possession of another---No, my resolution on that head is unalterably fixed; yet I feel I must ever be an admirer of beauty; nor can it be deemed inconstancy, since, as all perfections were summed

up

up in her, I still admire her charms, though displayed in others---No rash vow, repeated I---O *Mountague*, believe me, vows like yours are always rash, and I fear, my friend, you will one day too late experience that they are so at your time of life, and with a breast so susceptible of tender impression, it will be next to a miracle if you do not experience a second passion. Your brother was highly offended at my suspicion, and endeavoured, with great warmth, to vindicate himself from the charge---He love again! O, I little knew his heart, or the force of a passion so deeply rooted as his; a passion that could not expire but with his life---I am much mistaken, however, if the bright *Isabella* has not already made some slight breaches in it, though heaven forbid he should too far encourage the soft intruder. It is time I should begin to talk to him of her, who is, by all accounts, not inferior to this fair *Parisian*---The young, the blooming *Sophia*---Her he may love with safety---Adieu my worthy friends.

I am, with great esteem,

Yours,

JOHN HARVEY.

END of the FIRST VOLUME.



